

THE SEVENTEEN DZOGCHEN TANTRAS

THE SELF-LIBERATED VIDYĀ TANTRA

A Translation of the
RIGPA RANGDROL

TRANSLATED BY
Ācārya Malcolm Smith



THE SEVENTEEN DZOGCHEN TANTRAS, VOLUME 2

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In Sanskrit:1

In Tibetan:

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1. The source language of the translation, needed for authenticity.

2. “Great vidyā self-liberated all unravels tantra so-called,” respectively. [TN: *Mahāvidyāsvamuktisarvaghaṭṭitantranāma*. In the Tsamdrak stemma, the given Indic language title is *Mahāvidyāśukariātmasarvasūtratantranāma*. We have elected to leave the title above in place because it has the benefit of marginalia. However, the Tsamdrak title is definitely the earlier version. The Tingkyé edition glosses the Tsamdrak title as the *Tantra of Great Self-Liberated Vidyā That Unravels All*.]

1. THE NIDĀNA

HOMAGE TO BHAGAVĀN Yawns with Strength.

Thus I taught at one time:³ “Children of good family,⁴ listen properly! The continua of the retinue will be freed by my teaching of the blazing lamp⁵ of vidyā.⁶ [2a] Do not be distracted by mental concepts! Part from the four extremes of ignorance (*avidyā*)!”

Thus, after vidyā (free from the four extremes) looked at the place, the palace of phenomena, vidyā taught, teaches, and will teach from the pure dimension, the realm of light, the space of body, the rays of speech, the maṇḍala of mind, the place of dharmatā, the ornaments of wisdom, the place of Akaniṣṭha, and the pure palace.

Thus I⁷ heard⁸ at one time: [2b] The Bhagavān Powerful Heroic Youth was in the charnel ground called Blazing Volcano in a nirmāṇakāya buddhafield dimension. After an infinite retinue of gods, humans, asuras, and bodhisattvas gathered, he went to give the teaching.

Next, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request: “Oh Bhagavān who possesses great compassion, please teach the perfect system for unravelling the great tantra.”⁹

Then, the bhagavān replied: “Oh great assembled gathering, listen! Listen properly to my teaching of the great method of self-originated secret mantra. The meaning of all Dharmas will be clarified by this great tantra through self-originated axioms.”

Next, he spoke these verses:

“Oh! The dimension of pristine consciousness is vast,
asserted to be the core of everything;¹⁰
it is the transcendent state of the very profound mind;
teaching this meaning of the whole distilled essence
eliminates concepts. [3a]

After people of average capacity
have died, left this world, passed through the bardo,
and have been born in buddhafields of partially visible emanations,¹¹
they are free from all paths of saṃsāra.

Now then, there is the name, the mode of liberation, the nidāna, and the introduction.

First, the reason for the nidāna will be explained: the teacher, place, retinue, time, and teaching, and the principle of explanation.¹²

In this king of great tantras, there is the place of the explanation, the enjoyments, and the outer, inner, secret, and totally perfect.¹³ It must be understood that way for all tantras.

The nidāna is explained in the following way: the place¹⁴ of the teacher,¹⁵ the retinues, and the initiation of the dialogue by the father should be understood in all tantras.

Further, the name is explained as follows: the name, the homage,¹⁶ and the commitment are shown in the words at the beginning.

The main body of the text is taught as follows: explained concisely, extensively, and very extensively. That explains the words of the text.

The concluding topic is as follows: the great tantra is explained through the commentarial explanation of the meaning of the intimate instructions.¹⁷ [3b]

This system of explaining all secret mantra is likewise to be understood for all tantras.

The significance of the chapter titles and the individual names of the divisions are explained.

Further, the systems of composing the sounds and mantras will be taught like this — sound is explained in four parts: long, short, prolonged, and likewise, ‘the sound of the sound.’ Also, the location of the vocal production of a sound must be understood in this way for all tantras.

The mantras of syllables are as follows:
labials, appendages, and branches
constitute the discussion here
and are uttered in accordance with need.

Designated a labial and intelligible,
ma is left on the teeth;
the branches are *nirvāṇa*;
the appendages alone are *samsāra*.
In that way, the mantras and syllables
are uttered in accordance with need.

The systems of explaining the tantras and so on,
unraveling them all,
are solely explained above.

This great tantra of the great method of self-liberation [4a]
explains and unravels
the supreme wisdom that liberates all.
This tantra unravels the knots
binding all tantras.
The first topic is also explained by this tantra.

The outer topics are as follows:
the specific places, times, and so on
are shown and explained.

The inner topics are as follows:
first, the explanatory topic of the chronicle,
then, the topics of the foundation and the purpose,
and finally, the topics of the syllables and the words.
These accordingly shall be explained as the inner topics.

The chronicles are shown with three topics:
known as the trio of the lineage of the transcendent state,
the symbolic lineage, and the aural lineage.

The topic of the foundation is as follows:
vidyā is explained to the retinue
through twenty-one oral instructions.

The topic of the purpose
is the confirmation of the pristine consciousness of *vidyā*.

Because this shows its purpose
and since this truly unravels
all tantras, āgamas, and upadeśas,
the purpose is shown to be twofold.

The topic of syllables is as follows:
it is shown because it gathers everything
and it is shown because it produces everything.

The method of explaining the topic of the words is next. [4b]
The truth is explained through words.

Though there are many systems of explanation with words,
this one will be elaborated below.

In order to demonstrate the words of the beginning in detail,
questions and answers

are expressed as the retinue and teacher.

Further, there is a brief explanation and an extensive explanation.

The systematic methods of explanation, brief and extensive,
are explanations connected with utterly pure words.

Further, first, the location of the emanation
and the topic of the chronicle are explained
as the natural location of the emanation
and the location of the parinirvāṇa.

The sequence of the cause, the definition,
and the method of explanation of emanations is as follows:

First, the cause demonstrates the cause of the emanation.

Since right training and seeing the great meaning

are the support and solace

of all those great persons,

they are known in all tantras as ‘the cause of emanation.’

The definition of *emanation* is as follows:

Here, the so-called partially visible ones,¹⁸

having turned away from saṃsāra and appeared in a pure buddhafield,
are explained as the great maṇḍala of the partially visible ones.

They teach whomever is to be tamed.

When they bring their deeds to completion, [5a]

they are known in all tantras as ‘partially visible nirmāṇakāyas,’
explained in all tantras respectively.

In this way, the words at the beginning of all tantras
are extensively and rightly explained.

Though no one understands
that rightly authoritative topic,
there is also no need to give any justification.
The major words and major topics should be explained
for the sole purpose of overwhelming the other inferior yānas.
Since the great, true significance was not understood in the words,
the words have been briefly explained above.

The systems of explaining the great king of tantras
explain the words and topics properly in this way:

In this great king of tantras [*Self-Arisen Vidyā*],

there are 750 ślokas,

10,700,000 words,

100,000 strokes,

and 86 chapters.

Among those, there are words of motivation, words of explanation,
hidden words, concealed words,

all the extremely secret words,

and the individual significance of meaning and syllables.

All the words, empty of being and nonbeing,

should be explained in accordance with their meaning,

shown in seven topics from head to foot.

Those should be understood from knowing the meaning

and the words of the reply

just as they are found in the tantra. [5b]

The homage, petition,

the commitment to explain, the words at the beginning,

and the brief, extensive, and very extensive explanations

are explained in the words of the text.

Thus, the topics and sections for understanding

the intimate instructions are stated to be seven.

That perfectly explains the topics from beginning to end.

The names of each of the individual topics of the chapters

shall be rightly explained below.

In order to demonstrate that tantra [*Self-Arisen Vidyā*] and pristine
consciousness,

listen and look to this king of tantras [*Self-Liberated Vidyā*].

Also, what is not unraveled in the other tantras

is unraveled through being shown in this tantra.

Since this is the great tantra that unravels the goal,

explains and unravels it,
be confident, be free of doubt, and attain your own purposes.
Gathering the infinite into one, the mind that I teach
produces the great significance.

Since the concluding topic and the branch topics
are fully explained, be confident.

Also, the system of explanation of the king of the teachings
is explained on this occasion.

The trio of explanations such as citations, explanations such as tantras,
and explanations such as intimate instructions
should be understood as entryways. [6a]

Citations are explained in three ways:

the citation to introduce the teaching,
the citation for true, full stability,
and the citation for confirming.

There are five types of explanations for tantras:

outer tantras, that is, explanatory tantras;
inner tantras, that is, confirmation tantras;
secret tantras, that is, tantras of intimate instructions;
totally complete tantras, that is, tantras for practice;
and tantras of aural lineages.

Also, there are three kinds of intimate instructions:

intimate instructions explained for practice,
for accomplishing the benefits of others,
and for giving up activities.

In that way, the systems of explanation are explained completely.
The words at the beginning are summarized and explained.”

3. Time.

4. Retinue.

5. Teacher.

6. Teaching.

7. Retinue.

8. The teaching for the retinue.

9. TN: The *Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra*.

10. In the great tantra.

11. The partial *nirmāṇakāyas*.

12. The perfect [teacher, etc.].

13. The structure is explained.

14. TN: Tsamdrak gives *yum*, “mother.”
15. Teaches the introduction.
16. The meaning of the initial homage.
17. Unraveling and explaining.
18. TN: In the *Great Chariot* by Longchenpa Drimé Öser (Klong chen pa Dri med 'od zer, 1308–1364), it is explained, “Since everything is perfect without good or bad in the buddhafiield of the characteristic of the sambhogakāya, there is no change. However, the *Union of the Sun and Moon Tantra* and so on teach that though the sambhogakāya appearing to bodhisattvas is a reflection that appears as the sambhogakāya of the teacher (with major and minor marks, and so on) and appears as other retinues and buddhafiields, it is a so-called partial nirmāṇakāya-sambhogakāya because it is included within the vision of the tenth stage. It is also called a “partial emanation” because it does not appear to others apart from bodhisattvas of the tenth stage. Though it appears as the sambhogakāya, it is actually nothing other than one’s own appearance. It is called a “partial emanation” because of appearing like a partial reflection of that appearance. Since it is an emanation of the nature of one’s own appearance, it is explained to be ‘the natural nirmāṇakāya.’”

2. THE CONCISE TOPICS

ONCE AGAIN, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request:

“Oh omniscient Bhagavān!

Since you have extensively explained the words at the beginning in that way,
please teach the words of the text
to us, the devoted retinue.”

Again he replied:

“Oh Kumārabhūta, listen! [6b]

Listen to my teaching with a joyful attitude.

In general, there are three kinds of systems of explanation of the tantra shown in the text:

the brief explanation, the extensive explanation,
and the very extensive explanation.

The brief explains each and every word,

the extensive conforms with the text,

and the very extensive has three topics,

which are held to be the three stages of the subject matter to be explained.

The subject matter to be explained is as follows:

to support one’s own tenets

and overthrow the tenets of another,

that is called ‘the subject matter of the explanation.’

The main topic of the explanation follows next

and is also an explanation of the meaning of the words,
explained in ten and twenty parts.

With the wisdom of the pouncing tigress,

delineate the major grounds of the topics and explain.

With a mind that soars like a garuḍa,

structure the topics and explain.

With a mind like the voice of a lion,

overwhelm the inferior vehicles and explain.

With a mind like a crawling tortoise,

explain through combining the syllables.¹⁹

With a mind like a pecking pigeon,
thoroughly investigate deviations and obscurations, and explain.

With a mind like the stride of a champion, [7a]
gather the extensive into the meaning and explain.

With a mind like a prone elephant,
focus on the view and explain.

With a mind like a flock of garuḍas soaring together,
seek the point of the meaning and explain.

With a mind like the predatory smile of an eagle,
explain the meaning without any doubt.

Like a *bharal* lamb resting on a rock,
explain what is appropriate and inappropriate.

With a mind like a string of pearls,
meaningfully consolidate the intimate instructions and explain.

With a mind like a seasonal downpour,
overthrow the opponent and explain.

With a mind like the sun shining in the sky,
explain everything widely and expansively.

With a mind like the moon's deep glow,
explain saṃsāra as nirvāṇa.

With a mind like the posture of a lion,
explain in conformity with the meaning of meditation.

With a mind like the gait of a goose,

consolidate the structure of the topics and explain.

With a mind like a rainbow in the sky,
explain the dharmadhātu with its ornaments. [7b]

With a mind like the bite of a razor,
differentiate the view and explain.

With a mind like the surface of a mirror,
explain both causes and conditions.

With a mind like lightning in the sky,
explain quickly each word and each meaning.

With a mind like the emptiness of space,
explain broadly without limitations.

With a mind like a penetrating root,
demonstrate and explain the substance of vidyā.

With a mind like a twisting trunk,
twist phenomena into the ultimate and explain.

With a mind like a spreading branch,
understand the implications of the intimate instructions and explain.

With a mind like unfurled leaves,

explain the twenty-one topics.
With a mind like a vivid flower,
explain the lamps as two types.
With a mind like a ripened fruit,
explain the result that does not return to the cause.
All those methods of explanation
should each be understood.
The methods of explanation and the entryways
must be understood in that way.”

Next, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request:

“Oh pristine consciousness kāya!
What is the actual explanation?
Please teach the stages of the object to be explained.” [8a]

After that, again he replied:

“Oh, I am Powerful Youth.
Listen to the excellent meaning explained by me.²⁰
Give up activities of the mind and so on.

The stages of the subject of the explanation are as follows:
in order to explain the true meaning,
demonstrate the secret words,
hidden words, and concealed words.

The essence of the subject matter to be explained:
It is called an explanation because all
the hidden and concealed activities are explained
through the definitions in the associated tantras.
The summary of the stages has been clearly explained.

Further, the words are explained by implication.
Absence of grasping is the substance of all explanations.
In terms of all internal and external pristine consciousnesses,
the words of the explanation are acquired through fabrications
and the significance of pristine consciousness is applied through arising.
Showing the explanation is not the actual stages.

The characteristics of the stages of the subject matter to be explained:
There is no view that grasps onto something.
Through being unreal and apparent,
the sound of the explanation is empty of sound.

The words of the explanation are applied to the meaning.

The meaning of the explanation is gathered into the dharmadhātu.

The view of the explanation is never encountered. [8b]

The meditation of the explanation is nonabiding.

The sign of the explanation lacks a time frame.

The object of the explanation lacks a reference point.

Likewise, the stages of the explanation

should be understood in the same way for all tantras.

Amazing! Since the meaning itself is indicated,

the stages of the explanation are mentioned.

The text of the explanation is as follows:

View, meditation, conduct, result,

location, time, and the state of utter purity

are taught in the state of indicating the ultimate.

Likewise, the extensive, separate divisions

are derived from the subject topics.

Oh! The extensive explanation of the textual system

explains the occurrence of such and such a topic.

Since the true intention will be unraveled,

because it is to be unraveled by the *Self-Liberated*,

this explains the king of tantras.

In order to complete the subject matter of the explanation,

the chapters of the great tantra are explained.

There is both a system of liberation and a system of explanation,

which should be understood to cover all tantras.

Further, the system of explanation is as follows:

one must explain the meaning of the words

in order to unravel the meaning of the sounds.

For sounds, long and short,

the explanation is said to be like this: [9a]

a stacked on *a* is explained to be long,

ka attached to *ka* is long,

ba attached to *ba* is called “prolonged,”

dza attached to *dza* is called “heavy,”

nya attached to *nya* is called “long,”

sa attached to *sa* is called “light,”

a attached to *a* is explained as prolonged,

ma attached to *ma* is explained as heavy,

ga attached to *ga* is explained as long,
tsha attached to *tsha* is explained as light,
ha attached to *ha* is explained as great,
tha attached to *tha* becomes heavy,
kha attached to *kha* is shown to be long,
nga attached to *nga* is short,
ba attached to *ba* is called “great,”
and *tha* attached to *tha* is heavy.
In reality, those syllables
are to be understood as joined syllables.

Their rearrangement is as follows:
tsa attached to *ka* is heavy,
na attached to *tha* is heavy,
ba attached to *dza* is called “heavy,”
śa attached to *ma* is explained as heavy,
a attached to *ba* means heavy,
and *ta* attached to *ba* is explained as heavy. [9b]
Those are called the “heavy ones.”

Ra attached to *ya* is explained as long,
ha attached to *ga* is explained as long,
da attached to *tha* is explained as long,
kha attached to *’a* is called “long,”
na attached to *ta* is explained as long,
and *zha* attached to *śa* is long.
Those are explained as the long ones.

These are called the “prolonged”:
la attached to *sva* is prolonged,
du attached to *ya* is prolonged,
skres attached to *ka* is prolonged,
ha attached to *hra* is prolonged,
ra attached to *nya* is prolonged,
te attached to *nga* is prolonged,
la attached to *ya* is prolonged,
and *khru* attached to *sma* is prolonged.
Those are explained to be the prolonged syllables.

The meaning of the short is as follows:
ya attached to *nga* is called “light,”
nga attached to *ga* is explained to be light,
nga attached to *da* is called “light,”

zha attached to *ka* is called “light,”
sa attached to *ja* is short,
ni attached to *ya* is explained to be light,
u attached to *kha* is short,
nga attached to *sa* is short, [10a]
and *na* attached to *da* is explained as short.
Any branch arising on those
is mentioned in accordance with that.

Likewise, all the words of the text
are taught both briefly and very extensively.
The unerring system of explanation
of all the tantras that confirms reality
is explained in terms of the authority of seeing and the authority of
realization.

The clear knowing consciousness in the tantras of meditation
is also axiomatic for the tantra.

Regarding the definition and axioms for the great tantra,
first, among the definitions, there is the explanation of the cause:

The definition of the cause is the activity.
The definition of the condition is the agent.
Since the definition of the cause, the activity,
possesses eight parts, it is a tantra.
Since the definition of the condition, the agent,
is the lineage from the transcendent state of the victors, it is a tantra;
or alternately, because it is the aural lineage,
it is said to be a tantra.
That is the extensive textual system.”

19. TN: *Sngags gyi spyi don tshangs dbyangs 'brug sgra* by Longchenpa identifies these first four similes as the four branches for explaining the Seventeen Tantras.

20. This analysis.

3. THE SUMMARY TOPIC

ONCE AGAIN, Guhyapati made the following request:²¹

“Oh Bhagavān! Please teach the topic of realization, [10b]
the topic of the words of the text,
and similarly, the topic of the words of the conclusion.”

Once again he replied:

“Oh Guhyapati Vajrapāṇi,
having properly stabilized your mind,
keep this firmly in mind!

Because those with realization of Dharma and so on
enter with fearless faith,
this scripture of the true meaning will be explained.
Having abandoned fearful thoughts, listen!

Oh Guhyapati Vajrapāṇi,
the textual system free from a sign
has been explained and unraveled above.

The meaning of the summary shall be explained here:
The topic of the intimate instruction, the topic of the axioms,
and the three things to bring to an end
are known in all tantras.
The three things to bring to an end are as follows:

confusion, the knot of bewilderment;
anger, the knot of appearance;
and desire, the knot of the path.
These three are known in all tantras as the three aspects.
In order to remove these, the oral instruction is explained.
Further, in order to remove mental doubts,
the twenty-one introductions
shall be explained without error. [11a]

The audience for the explanation is sentient beings.
The cause of the explanation pervades them all.
Further, the system of explanation is as follows:
Since the face of the object, dharmatā, is encountered outwardly,
the essential meaning is encountered inwardly.
Since one's luminescence is encountered outwardly,
the appearance of pristine consciousness is seen inwardly.
Since the luminescence of the elements is encountered outwardly,
the pure buddhafields are seen inwardly.
Since the state of space is encountered outwardly,
the essentials of the lamps are seen inwardly.
Since the object of the sense organs is encountered outwardly,
the phenomena of the mind are liberated in their own place.
Since the object to be seen is encountered outwardly,
the result of cultivation is seen inwardly.
Since the object of grasping is encountered outwardly,
the self-apparent essence free from grasping is seen.
Since the pure object is encountered outwardly,
the pure buddhafields are seen effortlessly.
Since the self-apparent object is encountered outwardly,
the nonarising, self-apparent essence is seen.
Since the tantras of secret mantra are encountered outwardly,
ceaseless appearances are seen.

The Dharma that sees into the heart of objects²²
is free from action and effort, and has always been pure.
There is no progress in the heart, the essence itself. [11b]
There is no basis for the deviation of grasping on the path.
There is no taint of a cause of activity
in phenomena that are empty of being and nonbeing.
All-inclusive, free from objects,
and without a basis of deviant grasping at signs,
as such, plant the seeds of the oral instructions
and practice through the strength of cultivation.
Also, the object and method of demonstrating the instruction
should be understood like this in all tantras.

First, demonstrate the ultimate heart essence
with the example maṇḍala.
After that, create confidence and confirm
with the introduction of the signs.
Next, perform the stages of practice
with the introduction of the meaning.

One should confirm the three kāyas
with the introduction of the maṇḍala of the sun.
Recognize the first bardo
with the introduction of the moon in water.
Recognize the dharmadhātu
with the introduction of the cloudless sky.
Recognize the surrounding enclosure
with the introduction of the rainbow in the sky.
Recognize the four pristine consciousness appearances
with the introduction of the reflection in the ocean.
Recognize the four pristine consciousnesses
with the introduction of the surface of the mirror. [12a]
Recognize nonconceptual clarity
with the glow of a lamp.

Recognize stainless original purity
with the sphere of a crystal.
Recognize the dharmakāya of original purity
with the introduction of the youthful vase.
Recognize the appearance of the clusters
with the introduction of the experience of the rūpakāya.
Recognize both buddhafi elds
with the introduction of the maṇḍala and the mirror.
Recognize the shafts of light of the heart
with the introduction of the tubes of light.
Recognize the knowledge of ignorance
with the introduction of the cloudy sky.
Recognize the characteristics of a bodhisattva
with the introduction showing the half-forms.
Recognize the essence of pristine consciousness
with the introduction of the bronze bowl.
Recognize the wrathful buddhafi eld
with the introduction of the powerful hero.
Recognize one's own reality
with the introduction of the partially visible mask.
Recognize the experience of the appearances
with the method of equipoise of the lamps.
Likewise, confirm each and every pristine consciousness
with the twenty-one introductions.
This extensively explains the topics of the text.

Amazing! The complete system is as follows: [12b]
complete in the text,²³ complete in the beginning,

complete emptiness, complete pristine consciousness,
complete five lights, complete five kāyas,
and in the end, having completed the maṇḍala empowerment
of the tathāgatas,
one should seal with the oral instructions.

Also, explain the unerring great scripture
to those who possess the method of secret mantra
and perfectly abide in samaya.

This supreme, very secret pristine consciousness,
the extracted essence of the critical points of secret mantra,
the nectar of secret pristine consciousness
of the transcendent state that is considered immeasurable,
the meaning that all find difficult to understand,
is asserted to be the great, utterly pure transcendent state
that is perfect in this deity
of all secret maṇḍalas.

The meaning of the texts is complete in the words at the beginning.
The meaning of the beginning is complete in the words of the conclusion.
In this great king of tantras,
the maṇḍala that possesses the three concealments,
the three secrets, and the six intimate instructions
should be understood from the body of the text.
Likewise, the teaching in the king of tantras
is free of faults and disputes.
Since the beginning words, the text, and so on [13a]
are extremely clear,
this explains many texts.

The method of explaining the king of tantras
is explained extensively with three topics:
the topic of the text, the extensive explanation of the intimate instructions,
and likewise, the individual stages
are explained and fully unraveled.

Also, in the method of explaining this tantra,
there is the explanation of the importance of the tantra,

the size of the tantra, the illustrative examples,
and the explanation of the axiom for the tantra.

It is extensive because of the extensive analysis,
the extensive, secret oral instructions,

and because it is the vehicle that possesses realization.

It is explained with three kinds of summaries:
the summary explicating the meaning of “vehicle,”
the summary of the great method of equipoise,
and the summary of the stage of vidyā.

Further, the extensive explanation is as follows:
Just as the sun and moon are contained
within the empty sky,
the diversity of great pristine consciousness
is contained within the vast palace of phenomena;
the pristine consciousness of empty vidyā is contained
within the vast space of the ultimate;
and the essence of the lamps of pristine consciousness is contained
within the space that is free from signs. [13b]
Outer, inner, and secret phenomena are contained
within the lamp of the pure dhātu.
The extensive explanation is like that.

Regarding the words of the request and the reply,
there are three topics in the words of request:
the limited request for one’s own benefit,
the expansive request for others’ benefit,
and the request for the benefit of both.

There are seven topics in the reply:²⁴
intending the remedial meaning,

intending the condensed meaning,
intending the provisional meaning,
intending the indirect meaning,
the reply of the special stage,
intending the explanation of a special path,
and the reply that accords with intelligence.

The question, answer,
summary, and extensive explanation
unravel the meaning in the following way:
Intending the remedial meaning means
that for the eighty thousand afflictions
there are just as many doorways of Dharma.
The inconceivable and inexpressible
is said to be beyond judgment.

The concise meaning is as follows:
The eighty thousand afflictions
can be condensed into three roots.
The eighty-four thousand gateways [14a]
are explained as three when condensed.
Those can be condensed in the following way:
the eighty thousand afflictions
are condensed into a single root — avidyā (ignorance).
Likewise, the eighty-four thousand gates
can also be condensed into one — vidyā (knowledge).
That is said to be the condensed meaning.

The provisional meaning includes
describing the faults of saṃsāra
and describing the qualities of nirvāṇa.
Since a house is entered through the front,
it is taught for the benefit of those with inferior intelligence.
That is the explanation of the provisional meaning.

The indirect meaning is explained as follows:
In order to keep the meaning secret from those of inferior intelligence,
the explanation is indirect and hidden.
In order to conquer others,
the intention is explained indirectly.
In words, indirect; in meaning, provisional;
the indirect intention is explained in the words of the intimate instruction.

The intention of the extraordinary stage is
the roar of the intention of the Great Perfection.

The intention at the time of the path
is the three or twenty-one intimate instructions.

The intention that corresponds with the intellect
is the twenty-one vehicles.

The reply that confirms a definition
is the meaning of the Secret Vehicle. [14b]

Also, the inconceivable meanings
are this Secret Vehicle itself.

Though there are many intentional vehicles,
the meaning of this one is not understood.

Therefore, the great vehicle should be clearly proclaimed.
This²⁵ should be practiced very secretly.

Those who partake of the critical points of secret mantra
enjoy the space of ultimate great bliss.
Therefore, one should cultivate this great tantra
that is the distilled essence of all vehicles.

This great tantra of Secret Mantrayāna
is enjoyed immensely in the state of bliss.
The king of secret mantra tantras is explained to be a vehicle.

From among the introduction, the main text, and the conclusion,
the concise summary topic has been explained.
Likewise, whichever great tantra is explained,
that concise summary topic can be understood in all tantras in the same
way.

The words and meanings have been explained more extensively
and much more extensively.
Since this explains the great, definitive meaning,
it frightens the very unintelligent
among the classes of the inferior vehicles.
This great, truly definitive scripture
is the highest and unequalled.

The explanation is associated with the eight axioms.
These eight axioms include [15a]
the axiom of definitive utter purity,
the axiom associated with the benefit of others,
the axiom that accomplishes personal benefit,
the axiom of nominal signs,
the axiom of entering the path,
the axiom of the truthful tantra,
the axiom of the definitive scripture,
and the axiom of the knowledge that defeats.

Likewise, the eight axioms
can be understood in all tantras.
The axioms of the yogis' path
that arise and cease from stage to stage
can be understood on the paths and stages.

Without grasping phenomena, free from mental signs,

one approaches the meaning of rightly acquired emptiness. The concealed intimate instructions of secret mantra should be understood from the words of the text, and likewise, will be explained extensively by implication. Proceeding thus on the path that is not traversed, that is the whole of the very extensive explanation of the summary topic.”

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21. Third, the explanation of the concise meaning of the text.
 22. The heart that removes the taint of objects.
 23. Explaining the final summary of completion.
 24. The further elaboration of the question.
 25. The supreme vehicle.

4. THE INTIMATE INSTRUCTIONS

Oṃ hūṃ

Once again, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request: [15b] “Oh greatly compassionate Bhagavān! The system of liberation of the tantras being so, please teach the system of explaining the intimate instructions.”

Again, Mahāvajradhara²⁶ replied, “Oh friends, listen! Listen properly to my teaching of the unerring meaning! Since there is no attainment to possess in the result, perfect complete buddhahood, there is nothing to be illuminated or obscured in pristine consciousness. There is no judgment to apply in the view. There are no gaps in the transcendent state. There is no apprehended object or apprehending subject in light. There is no matter in the kāyas. There is no limitation in the dhātu. There is no grasping to a self in objects. There is nothing to see in the buddhafiels. That is the deed of a samyak sambuddha.

“Now, to demonstrate the enjoyment of vidyā, the topics of the clear intimate instructions will be distinguished. The essence is original purity. The nature is natural perfection. Compassion is a partial appearance. There is no limitation to the clusters in the buddhafiels. There are five visions, two sources, six essences of pristine consciousness, three locations of pristine consciousness, one measure of pristine consciousness, [16a] four paths of pristine consciousness, and one progression of pristine consciousness. With three transcendent phrases, there is no demarcation between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. With six analytical words, wisdom is brought to the object. With three illustrative words, the mother and child pristine consciousnesses meet. The location of pristine consciousness is found with a single initial place of origin. The method of practice is explained with a single equipoise of vidyā. The meaning can be contained within oneself with the three realities of the kāyas. The enjoyment of the example vidyā’s clear radiance of light is extensively explained with the objects of vidyā. The recognition of the pristine consciousness of the path is explained.”

Next, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request: “Oh lord of compassion, please teach the characteristics of the basis and the path.”

Once again came the reply: “Sublime person, you must listen! I will teach this properly! Do not allow your mind to be distracted! The clear meaning of all of that is as follows: The basis is beyond thought and beyond concept. The essence is beyond difference. [16b] The nature is beyond substantiality.

Compassion is beyond action. The result is beyond being accomplished through effort. Pristine consciousness is beyond being and nonbeing.

“Conduct is associated with the Dharma. Samaya is associated with the view. Accomplishment is associated with the deity. Empowerment is associated with the intimate instructions. Realization is associated with the absence of duality. Meditation is associated with the absence of grasping. The view is associated with names. Names are associated with the essential meaning. The example is associated with rainbows. The sign is associated with the lamps. The dhātu is associated with the sky. Buddhas are associated with sentient beings.

“There are no phenomena in the essence. There is no mind in a buddha. The result ripens in sentient beings. There is nothing to accomplish in the Dharma. There is nothing to accomplish as a result. The transcendent state is seamless. There is no diminishment or setting aside in compassion. There is no being or nonbeing in the view.

“The place of origin is outside the basis. Why? Because in the beginning, delusion is caused by conditions.

“There is an appearance outside a path. Why? Because there is a need to practice.

“There is an appearance outside a result. Why? [17a] Because the result never reverts to the cause.

“Amazing!²⁷

If one recognizes the five paths of buddhahood,
appearances arise that cannot be proven or negated.

When seeing the truth of the buddhas,
after one’s consciousness grows strong,
pristine consciousness permeates space.

The one who attains the transcendent state of buddhahood
never engages objects with consciousness.

When practicing the transcendent state of buddhahood,
pristine consciousness illuminates space in the following way:

When the appearances arise in the field, they possess kāyas.

When the appearances of pristine consciousness arise to oneself,
spheres of light arise in the sky.

When vidyā is not covered with afflictions,
vidyā does not fall under the influence of conditions.

When the four māras are conquered,
appearances do not fall under the power of afflictions.

When the great perfection is carried out to the end,
consciousness does not become dull or agitated.

When illuminated from within by pristine consciousness,
recognize this is just like waking from sleep.

When vidyā illuminates space,
recognize this is just like dawn. [17b]
When pristine consciousness is free from substantiality,
recognize this is just like getting drunk on wine.

“Alas, son of a good family, when appearances of pristine consciousness manifest, so too the appearances of obstructing māras²⁸ will arise in the same way. Alas, son of a good family, when those appear to you, what shall you do? Those appearances are false. Those are only causes of saṃsāra. Those statements, self-appearances, and pleasing words are the first deceptions of Māra.

“After that, Māra, having taken the guise of a dākinī, will say, ‘Child of a good family, I shall bestow a prediction upon you: “Those are false, those are only errors. Child of a good family, if you do it this way, you will be liberated.”’ This one giving the prediction should be recognized to be Māra.

“At that time, do not waver from one’s true state. Gaze with the gaze of an elephant.”

At that time, Bhagavān Powerful Heroic Youth spoke in verse:

“A A

Amazing!

There is an inconceivable number
of māras that bind with conceptual signs,
inconceivable due to being beyond description. [18a]

Whatever conceptual stirring there may be,
all is the nature of Māra.

Further, the brief explanation is as follows:

If there is attachment to the objects of subject and object, it is the outer
Māra.

If one engages in conceptual delusion, it is the inner Māra.

The free flow of concepts is the delusion of Māra.

Pleasing ornaments on the body are a delusion of Māra.

Remedial activity is a delusion of Māra.

Attachment to an enemy is a delusion of Māra.

If one conceives of a self, it is a delusion of Māra.

If attachment to the body arises, that too is Māra.

If there is attachment to the apprehended object, it is the outer Māra.

If there is attachment to the taste of samādhi, it is the inner Māra.

If there is attachment to apparent objects, it is the Māra of objects.

If afflicted with doubts about ‘is it or isn’t it?’ it is the Māra of concepts.

If carried away by the distractions of activities, it is the Māra of saṃsāra.

If one is filled with concepts, it is the Māra of the mind.

If one is attached to phenomena of subject and object, it is the Māra of the

intellect.

If one is attached to wealth and retinue, it is the Māra of distractions.

If one is attached to the phenomena of saṃsāra, it is the Māra of the aggregates.

If one is attached to the swamp of debate, it is the Māra of the afflictions.

If one is attached to pleasant and unpleasant companions, it is the Devaputra Māra. [18b]

If there is spectacular anger, it is the Māra of death.

If there is attachment to the meditation deity, it is the Māra of bondage.

If there is attachment to the five objects of attachment and aversion, it is the Māra of the lower realms.

If there is attachment to the ten Dharma practices, it is the womb of Māra.

If there is attachment to the paths of saṃsāra, it is the Māra of bewildered ignorance.

If there is greedy attachment to objects, it is the Māra of attachment.

If one criticizes the Dharma, it is the Māra of jealousy.

If one grasps the faults in others, it is the Māra of pride.

If one abandons others, it is the Māra of faults.

In that way, there are inconceivable māras,
so many they cannot be listed.

However, when the four fundamental māras are conquered,
the other māras will have no chance.

The different māras are presented in that way.

The great pristine consciousness of vidyā,
which is not controlled by māras,

should be recognized in the state of space.

The great pristine consciousness of vidyā itself
never slips into any standpoint.

If it is realized to be the dharmakāya,
a so-called māra does not exist somewhere else.

The dharmakāya is free from subject and object,
and it is free from the standpoint of the Māra of signs.

As such, the scripture that is ascertained through practice, [19a]
the intimate instruction for being free from māras, has been explained.

The appearances of pristine consciousness free of grasping
arise without abiding in a direction,

and they are liberated without entering a path.

The result, reality, is displayed in space.

In the maṇḍala of reality,
the secret palace of pristine consciousness is shown;
shining pristine consciousness is displayed in the rays.

In the palace of the pure dhātu,
empty pristine consciousness is displayed in space.
Pristine consciousness arises from concepts.
Absence of memory is found in memory.
Knowledge is found in the middle of ignorance.
Pristine consciousness arises from conceptuality.
Clarity is found in the state of emptiness.
The essence is found in the center of the mind.
Likewise, phenomena of mind and matter
are liberated in the essence.
Wisdom is clear on the path of secret mantra.
Cultivation is clear on the path of method.
Likewise, all phenomena of signs
are liberated in the state of signlessness.
All phenomena of activities
are liberated in the state of emptiness free of activity.
All phenomena that self-appear without being apprehended

are liberated in the space of pure emptiness.
All meanings lacking an illustration of their intention [19b]
are liberated in the truly secret dhātu.
The essence that generates the variety
is liberated in the state without ideation.
The secret display of secret mantra
is liberated in the dhātu that combines the four pristine consciousnesses.
The mental apparitions of dualistic appearances
are liberated in the state of the sole, unique sphere.
The city of the appearances of all pristine consciousnesses
is liberated in the space of the five clusters.
The seed of perfect pristine consciousness
is liberated in the dhātu of great original purity.
Therefore, the Māra of saṃsāric conceptuality
does not exist, is empty, and cannot be grasped.
Also, Māra is realized in its own state.
In the appearances of great pristine consciousness,
there is no Māra and nothing that can be a māra.
There is no Māra apart from
the solitary, self-originated one.
A māra depends on one's own vidyā.
Other than that, all māras
do not exist by nature and are intrinsically destroyed.
Prior to me,
not even the name "Māra" existed.

Since Māra also comes from me,
no so-called māra exists elsewhere.
The one great root Māra
is the concept that grasps a self.
If I am realized, Māra fades away.
All māras of conceptual grasping
are pacified in my state through a method.
Therefore, all māras of conceptual grasping
never existed and are pure from the beginning.

Māras are the display of pristine consciousness,
arising from me, deluded about me,
and therefore, are my apparitions.
My display is inconceivable.
My apparitions are not troublesome.
Everything is my display.”

26. He explained the system of explaining the basis with the intimate instructions.

27. Seeing shows the measure of pristine consciousness.

28. Explaining the cause of saṃsāra.

5. FREEDOM FROM THE CHARACTERIZED

ONCE AGAIN, the sublime person, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, made the following request:

“Oh wrathful Bhagavān!

The system of explaining the intimate instructions being so,
teach the system of liberation from existent phenomena
to us, the devoted retinue.”

Again, he replied:

“Amazing!

Listen Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta!

I shall explain the vajra meaning.

You should listen with a positive mind.

The dharmatā of characterized things
is free from dharmas of grasping activities.

The dharma of the result that does not revert to the cause [20b]
is the truth of the unmistaken path,

because a perceptible appearance is free from the mind
and liberated from activities of the path.

The appearances of pristine consciousness do not exist as things.

Since pure pristine consciousness exists,

the domain of pure entities is transcended,

extremes and defiled phenomena are transcended,

and the contamination of the four extremes vanishes right where they are.

Free from the aspect of grasping

because the transcendent state of secret mantra is not an entity,

it is free from an object of grasping

and it is free of the tainted phenomena of entities,

but it is soiled by thoughts of desire.

It is said that everything is produced and emerges

from the pristine consciousness of the self-arisen method.

The phenomena of the path and taints

are originally pure and are a state of purity.

Since it is praised by all victors,
the great pristine consciousness of uniformity
is displayed in the space of secret pristine consciousness.
The visibly apparent pristine consciousness that appears
is the mudrā that signifies the victors.
Since they dwell in the state of utter purity,
they are in nondual union with the secret mothers.

The display of Samantabhadra
acts everywhere and emanates everywhere. [21a]
The unimpeded sun of compassion dawns
in the sky of realized pristine consciousness.
Emanations of pristine consciousness arise in the ten directions
from the five kinds of appearances.
All that arises from the *bhaga* of Samantabhadrī
is a cause of generating pristine consciousness;
arising from everything, arising as everything.
All that arises from Samantabhadra's wisdom
is completely explained by me.
The pristine consciousness of Samantabhadra
is unimpeded like the limits of space.
The maṇḍala of the dhātu is inexhaustible.
The unceasing maṇḍala of pristine consciousness
is displayed to all and enjoyed.

Amazing!²⁹ All substantial phenomena
are intrinsically pure, without conditions from the beginning,
and do not abide in tainted phenomena.
Have no doubts about apparent phenomena.
On the right path there is no final limit;
there is no need to practice on substantial objects.
Rest in inexpressible samādhi,
in concentration free of memory.
Because there is no path or objects of grasping,
the bondage of the four taints unravels.
Since the pristine consciousness of buddhahood should be shown,
abandon the words that depend on cause and condition. [21b]
Since the pristine consciousness of buddhahood exists within,
partake and enjoy all
the unceasing appearances of great pristine consciousness.
Empty of nominal signs and grasping,
the lamp of the path of emptiness is empty.
A vidyā that performs actions does not exist

in the essence of pure consciousness.

The lamp of the path of awakening
arises from the causal deviation of grasping.

There is nothing to refute or prove on the path.

Empty vidyā does not exist in any way
and is devoid of grasping to partiality.

Appearances are empty of substantial phenomena.

Emptiness transcends signified phenomena.

Transcendence itself is inexpressible.

Also, the grasping of speculative views
is liberated in its own place without signified phenomena,
mere conventions of self-arisen sound.

All phenomena of the two conventions —

the position of existence and the position of nonexistence —
are free from views in the state of utter purity.

The deviation of grasping is not dharmatā;
dharmatā transcends objects of differentiated entities.

It has been explained that verbal signs and verbal entities
depend on objects.

The pristine consciousness that perfects activities
is free from words describing entities.

The vajra of secret mantra is solid and hard; [22a]
partake of the method of the vajra of pristine consciousness.

The vajra of the elements is wholly pristine consciousness;
partake of the method of the vajra of emptiness.

The vajra of the maṇḍala is infinite.

The vajra of creation appears everywhere.

The vajra of sound is for the purposes of the retinue.

The vajra of signs is free from names.

The vajra of infinity enters into objects.

The vajra of the expanse of space is totally empty.

The vajra of secret mantra transcends objects.

The vajra of self-origination is inexpressible.

The vajra of existence and nonexistence transcends all.

The vajra of qualities is amazing.

The vajra of karma is totally accomplished.

The vajra of clarity is vast.

The vajra of diversity is very comprehensive.

The vajra of utter purity is uniform.

The vajra of vidyā is very clear.

The vajra of thought is very diffuse.

The vajra of ignorance is very cloudy.

The vajra of mind is very disturbed.
The vajra of confusion is very dense.
The vajra of hatred is very hot.
The vajra of desire is very grasping.
The vajra of pride is very bellicose.
The vajra of jealousy is very tormented.

The vajra of anger is very dangerous.
The vajra of conditions is very destructive.
The vajra of saṃsāra is very clinging.
The vajra of passion is very tumescent.
The vajra of clinging is very clinging. [22b]
The vajra of accumulating is very cumulative.
The vajra of afflictions is very chronic.
The vajra of 'I am' is very grasping and attached.
The vajra of other is very faithful.³⁰
The vajra of delusion is very attached.

After that,³¹ once the meaning has been explained and unraveled,
those of the utterly pure great family should practice.
All those who are deluded about awakening
should not give up meditative placement on the object.
They will not reach the meaning of pristine consciousness
by wishing for nirvāṇa,
but they will by accepting this meaning.
If one deviates from the meaning, awakening is far away.
If one dwells in the meaning, awakening is close by.
In order to exhaust delusion, pristine consciousness itself
arises from all the fully blazing rays of light.
In order to fully demonstrate pristine consciousness,
it will be explained in the concise summation.
The basis and path of the full explanation
have been shown and explained above.
The sublime person who meditates in that way
obtains the self-originated after exhausting the dharmatā of entities.
The self-originated that is free of entities
is the pristine consciousness that does not grasp anything.”

29. The axiom for the nonpersistence of entities.

30. Also fearful.

31. Demonstrating that the whole meaning of pristine consciousness is infinite.

6: THE CHAPTERS OF NAMES AND TOPICS

ONCE AGAIN, that sublime person, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, said the following:

“Oh Bhagavān, master of the chapters!
The emptiness of things being so,
please teach
the chapters of the king of tantras unerringly
to us, the devoted retinue.”

Then, he perfectly replied:

“Oh Kumārabhūta, listen!
There are innumerable and inconceivable
systems of explaining the king of the great tantras.
Hold this brief explanation firmly in your mind.
The name of the chapter, the analogy,
the full explanation,
the composition, the act of explanation,
the stages of praise,
the reason it is to be explained, and the reason it appears
are individually delineated in each chapter [of the *Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra*].

Though the explanations are inconceivable
due to being inexpressible and beyond number,
since the authentic tantras teach these,
they all are like one’s eyes.
Those who have been long on the path

will be brought closer by hearing this.
The explanation of the text shall describe the chapters.

Next, to describe chapter 1, [23b]
it explains the nidāna chapter of the tantra.
The topics were explained above:
demonstrating the introduction of great utter purity,

the introduction of the transcendent words and topics,
and the introduction through enumeration.

The explanation of the meaning of chapter 2
is the extensive explanation of the branches of the introduction.
The topics have been perfectly explained as above.
There are three topics in the words of the titles:
the explanation of the initial extensive introduction,
the introduction of the conclusion,
and the introduction of the axiomatic words and meanings.

Chapter 3 explains conduct,
which is taught in the extensive explanation.
There are three topics within the topic of the concise explanation:
the conduct of the self-originated method,
the range of conduct of the words of the axioms,
and the range of conduct of nominal characteristics.

Chapter 4 explains meditation.
Its system of explanation
shows three topics free from doubt:
the explanation of the meditation that stops objects,
the meditation of self-originated emptiness,
and the meditation that subdues characteristics.

Chapter 5 explains the view.
There are three topics in the meaning of the view:

the explanation of the view that unravels self-originated hindrances,
the view of the words of equanimity,
and the view that indicates existence and nonexistence. [24a]

Chapter 6 explains the meaning of empowerment.
There are three topics concerning empowerments:
the result empowerment of secret mantra,
the empowerment of the knowledge of the view,
and the empowerment of the symbolic substances.

Chapter 7 explains the qualities of empowerment.
Further, there are three topics concerning empowerments:
externally, uprooting the elemental spirits,
internally, generating the heat of pristine consciousness,
and secretly, the qualities of the authoritative signs.

Chapter 8 explains the faults of not receiving empowerment.
That also is explained in three topics:
pristine consciousness will be dependent on appearances,
the recollection of oral instructions will be impaired,
and the Māra of the aggregates and so on are numerous.

Chapter 9 explains the connection between master and disciple.
That also has three topics:
the possessor of the essence indicates the significance of pristine
consciousness,
the qualified recipient is able to maintain secrecy,
and both show the importance of affection.

Chapter 10 explains the bonds of samaya.
That also has three topics:
demonstrating the qualities of protecting samaya,
demonstrating the faults of not protecting samaya,
and demonstrating that there is nothing to protect.

Chapter 11 explains the characteristics of the dharmakāya.
That also has three topics, [24b]
said to be these three:
natural dharmakāya,
great essence dharmakāya,
and seed dharmakāya.

Chapter 12 explains the characteristics of the sambhogakāya.
That also has three topics:
the sambhogakāya's location,
the sambhogakāya buddhafiield,
and the sambhogakāya's mode of appearance.

Chapter 13 explains the characteristics of the nirmāṇakāya.
That also has three topics:
the nirmāṇakāya that appears in accordance with a purpose,
the nirmāṇakāya of the half-visible buddhafiield,
and the nirmāṇakāya of self-originated compassion.

Chapter 14 explains the transcendent state of the three kāyas.
That also has three topics:
the explanation of the condensed transcendent state of the three kāyas,
the transcendent state of the complete three kāyas,
and the transcendent state of the resultant three kāyas.

Chapter 15 explains the five kāyas.

That also has three kinds of topics:

the five kāyas that are intrinsically liberated from characteristics,
the five kāyas present in the basis,
and the five kāyas that are brought to culmination.

Chapter 16 explains the five kinds of pristine consciousness.

That also is explained with three topics:

the pristine consciousness that is not an object of grasping,
the pristine consciousness of the appearances of the bardo,
and the pristine consciousness of the inner explained meaning.

Chapter 17 explains the twenty-five pristine consciousnesses. [25a]

There are also three topics:

the explanation that delineates and fully expands each,
the explanation that is the mere knowledge of the highly detailed,
and the explanation of the delineation with complete terms.

Chapter 18 explains the five lights applied to the kāyas.

That also has three topics:

explaining the light rays emerging from the kāyas,
explaining the kāyas being formed from light,
and explaining both as the display of the method.

Chapter 19 explains the characteristics of the outer elements.

That also has three topics:

the explanation of the individual characteristics,
the extensive explanation of their meaning,
and the explanation of the characteristics of the name.

Chapter 20 explains the inner elements.

That also has three topics:

the significance of the pristine consciousnesses,
the significance of the fundamental elements,
and the significance for inner warmth.

Chapter 21 explains the unmistaken meaning of the transcendent state of the buddhas of the three times.

That also has three topics:

the self-originated transcendent state of the buddhas,
the transcendent state explained in words,
and the transcendent state of self-liberated signs.

Chapter 22 explains the way sentient beings are liberated.

That also has three topics:

the way of liberation by apparent object,
liberation by the vajra body,
and liberation by the lamps.

Chapter 23 contains the explanation of the seed syllables.

That also has three topics:

first, there is the explanation of the system of explanation,
next, the appendages and the system of explanation of the branches,
and finally, the system of explanation of combining the appendages and
the syllables.

Chapter 24 explains the gradual methods of equipoise.

That also has three topics:

the method of equipoise on apparent objects,
the method of equipoise on the center of space,
and the method of equipoise on one's own eyes.

Chapter 25 explains the enumeration of the collection of views about the
self.

That also has three topics:

incorrect thinking,
incorrect conduct,
and incorrect words.

Chapter 26 explains the commentary on the views of self.

That also has three topics:

expositions on the methods of explanation,

expositions dependent on tantras,
and expositions of incorrect behavior.

That extensively explains the summaries.

The explanation of the path is not established in words.

In general, since the path is secret,

the subject topics have been explained together with the view. [26a]

The characteristics of the chapters have been explained.

This chapter explains those chapters perfectly and unravels them by
name.”

7. THE FOUNDATION CHAPTERS

ONCE AGAIN, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request:

“Oh Bhagavān Vajradhara!
The topics being so,
please teach
the chapters of the words of the foundations to us, the devoted retinue.”

[He replied:]

“Oh Kumārabhūta, listen!
The unmistakable meaning
will be explained by me. You should listen.
The chapters of names and topics
have been fully explained and elucidated.
Now then, the explanation that fully corresponds
with the words of the foundations shall be presented.
Further, the very secret words
from the characteristics of the chapters³²
are explained here without secrecy.
Listen with joyful minds!

In reality, pristine consciousness is unimpeded.
It is also the vision of all who have died.
Pristine consciousness is free from any mental grasping. [26b]

Therefore, the chapters of the words of the foundation shall be explained.

Amazing!

Chapter 27 explains the perfect vehicle.³³
That is explained with two topics:
the vehicle of characteristics and the vehicle of secret mantra.

Chapter 28 explains the foundation of delusion.
That is explained with seven topics:

deluding oneself,
deluded by causes and conditions,
deluded through both semblance and basis,
deluded by object and cognition,
deluded through symbolic signs,
deluded from the light of emptiness,
and deluded by the four extremes of obscurations.
Those extensively demonstrate³⁴ the state of delusion.

Chapter 29 explains the nature of sentient beings.

That also has four topics:
the nature of the evident kāya,
the nature of pervading light,
the nature of the vidyā of wisdom,
and the nature of pure vidyā.

Chapter 30 explains the reality of the basis.

That also has eight topics:
the reality of the unchanging essence,
the reality of the nature that pervades all,
the reality of compassion that pervades the field,

the reality of the illuminating light, [27a]
the reality of the pervasive, empty space,
the reality of nonduality's own appearance,
the reality of vidyā in the body,
and the reality of wisdom in the sky.

Chapter 31 explains the principle of one's realization of vidyā.

That also has three topics:
the system of twenty-one realizations,
the system of an ascertaining consciousness,
and the system of realizing the perception of appearances.

Chapter 32 explains the examples of vidyā.

That also has three topics:
the explanation of the example that illustrates the basis itself,
the example that illustrates the five paths,
and the illustration of the essence.

Chapter 33 explains vidyā's absence of grasping.

That also has two topics:
the absence of grasping pristine consciousness
and the absence of grasping with a special path.

Chapter 34 explains the state of delusion in the bardo.

That also has four topics:

the mode of delusion of mental appearances,

the mode of delusion of an analytical mind,

the mode of delusion that comes from the appearance of lights,
and the twenty-one modes of delusion.

Those are explained as the words of delusion.

Chapter 35 explains transcending into the Great Perfection. [27b]

That also has six topics:

the transcendence of the words of characteristics,

the transcendence of the self-originated axiom,

the transcendence of the fear of deviation and obscurations,

the transcendence of the directly perceived object,

the transcendence of the indirect meaning,

and the transcendence of the path of objects.

Chapter 36 explains the characteristics of maṇḍalas.

There are three topics in maṇḍalas:

the great fundamental maṇḍala,

the natural secret maṇḍala,

and the maṇḍala of constructed images.

Chapter 37 explains each individual's great meaning.

That is explained with a single topic:

each individual's pristine consciousness is the meaning gathered
into the maṇḍala of their heart.

Chapter 38 explains the principle of the realization of familiarity.

That has two topics:

the stages of practice

and the advice for measuring cultivation.

Chapter 39 explains the five allegories of realization.

That also has five topics:

explained as the practice tantra's allegory of natural appearance,

the allegory of the mind free of grasping,

the great allegory of consciousness for one's own benefit,

the allegory of the natural scripture,

and the allegory of the opening of space. [28a]

Chapter 40 explains allegories and a praise.

That is explained with four perfect topics:

the praise through the name,

the praise through the homage,
the praise to the three kāyas,
and the praise through wrathfulness.

Chapter 41 explains the allegories of delusion.
That is explained in two topics:
the allegory of the tantra that self-liberates grasping
and the five allegories of the apparent object.

Chapter 42 explains the period of the destruction of the teachings.
There are two topics in that:
demonstrating the arising of signs
and demonstrating when eons arise.

Chapter 43 explains the translation of the five allegories.
That also has two topics:
everything is explained in allegories
and everything is included in allegories.

Likewise, here, the intimate instructions on the meaning of the sounds
are taught very concisely.
There is neither creation nor completion
in the pristine consciousness that is free from signs.

Someone wishing to dwell
in the true foundation
should seek it in this chapter.”

-
- 32. That explains the characteristics of vidyā.
 - 33. Demonstrating the axioms of vidyā.
 - 34. Demonstrating the meaning of reality.

8. THE CHAPTERS OF COLLECTED TOPICS

ONCE AGAIN, the sublime person, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, made the following request:

“Oh Bhagavān Vajradhara!
Since the foundation chapters have been explained in that way,
now please teach us followers
the chapters of topics.”

Again, the Mahātma said:

Oh Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta!
Hold fast to my proper explanation!
Though words that correspond with meanings are infinite,
the significance of the topics
is explained fully and clearly.
Listen with fully devoted minds
to my explanation of the great method of liberating
all sentient beings who are bound by signs!

The significance of the chapters is as follows:

Chapter 44 explains the meaning of pristine consciousness.
There are five topics in that:
the meaning of the special path of pristine consciousness,
the common, intrinsic, all-pervading meaning,
the meaning of the mind of encompassing dharmatā,
the meaning of the mind of self-originated sound,
and the meaning of the mind of diverse play.

Chapter 45 explains the written lines of sound. [29a]
That has three topics:
it is said the male syllables are the syllables of method,
the female syllables are the syllables of wisdom,
and the genderless syllables are the syllables of compassion.

Chapter 46 explains the ḍākinīs' own speeches.
That also is explained in three topics:
each one speaking by name,
speaking on a single topic,
and teaching by the teacher's command.

Chapter 47 explains how the teacher arrives.
That also has three topics:
arriving through miraculous birth in a lotus,
arriving in the womb of a mother,
and exhibiting a very inferior form,
together with sounds and lights.

Chapter 48 extensively explains bindu.
That also has three topics:
the most excellent bindu of the basis,
the diverse bindu of the path,
and the totally perfect bindu of the result.

Chapter 49 explains the sounds of the axioms.
That has been explained extensively above.
That also has three topics:
the syllables of the sounds of names,
the syllables of indicative sounds,
and the syllables of condensed sounds.

Chapter 50 explains the basis, path, and result.
That also has six topics:
the essence is shown to be the basis of realization; [29b]

the nature is shown to be the basis of the method,
the path of the field of visible appearances,
and the path of the measure of cultivation;
the ascertainment of utter purity is shown to be the result;
realization is shown as never reverting to the cause.

Chapter 51 explains the axioms of mantra.
That also has five topics:³⁵
the axiom of the path and result,
the axiom of perceptible apparent objects,
the axiom of natural vidyā,
and the axiom of mantra.

Chapter 52 explains the total yoga.

That also has two topics:
the yoga that culminates in the result
and the yoga that remains on the path.

Chapter 53 explains the secret activities.

That also has four topics:
demonstrating total pacification,
the true meaning of increasing,
guiding beings through power,
and destroying the savage with wrath.

Chapter 54 explains dominating the summits.

That also is explained in three topics:
dominating the summits of the characterized object,
dominating the summits of the lamps,
and dominating the summits of the meaning of realization.

Chapter 55 explains upwelling from the ocean. [30a]

That also is explained in three topics:

the upwelling of the pristine consciousness in the field,
the upwelling of the qualities of the kāyas,
and the upwelling of the lamp of the dhātu.

Chapter 56 also explains the equal enumeration³⁶ of the sun and moon.

That also has two topics:
liberating migrating beings with a method
and demonstrating the wisdom that eradicates objects.

Chapter 57 explains the evenness of space.

That also is explained in four topics:
nonduality beyond extremes,
the goal that does not exist in a place,
the uniform dhātu of liberation,
and uniformity in the utterly pure meaning.

Chapter 58 explains the introduction via examples.

That also has three topics:
the example of the signified object,
the side of purity illustrated with an example,
and the appearance explained in a symbolic example.

Chapter 59 explains the state of the activities of emanation.

That is explained with two topics:

emanation from the state of dharmatā
and engaging whoever needs to be tamed.

Chapter 60 explains the measure of realizations.

That also has three topics:

the measure of the realization of appearances, [30b]

the measure of the realization of the path of the result,

and the measure of the realization of the object of clear realization.

Chapter 61 explains mind and ignorance.

That is explained in four topics:

Grasping is shown to be the root of ignorance.

The mind itself is shown to be a refuge by gathering [traces].

The intellects that are agents of delusion are shown to be companions.

The five aspects³⁷ are also shown to be companions.

Chapter 62 explains the pristine consciousness of vidyā.

That also is explained in four topics:³⁸

the vidyā of self-originated realization,

the vidyā of signified wisdom,

and the pristine consciousness that is a field of visible appearance.

Chapter 63 explains the nature as clarity.

There are three topics in that:

the nature of things as clarity,

the nature of nonarising as clarity,

and the all-pervading nature as clarity.

Chapter 64 explains different capacities.

That also has five topics:

the explanation of the divisions,

the explanation of only the words,

the explanation for those of very sharp capacity,

the explanation for those of dull capacity,

and the very extensive explanation.

Likewise, the secret meanings of the words

are fully explained and associated with each other. [31a]

The nominal and signified entities are fully explained and associated with each other.

When depending on signs themselves,

the appearances of pristine consciousness do not arise,

yet the great appearances of pristine consciousness
should be fully explained and described.

Further, the full explanation is as follows:

There is no pristine consciousness if one relies on the path
by grasping names and things.

Having fully explained the dharmatā

that has not appeared, its signs should be described.

Demonstrate the hidden and concealed words
in this secret chapter.

Demonstrate the words of the right path.

Because the seal of the vajra sign was impressed,
it is said to be the meaning of the vajra in the elucidation
of this great tantra that gives a full explanation.

It is taught that the meaning of the introduction should be explained
in order to encounter the domain of the true state
through example and meaning.

Therefore, the meaning of the signs has been extensively explained.

This chapter is taught

in order to extensively demonstrate and unravel
the maṇḍala of the utterly pure meaning.”

35. No more than four appear.

36. Also heat.

37. Also *appearances* occurs.

38. Here, only three topics are identified.

9. THE CHAPTERS OF FURTHER COLLECTED TOPICS

ONCE AGAIN, [31b] the sublime person, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, made the following request:

“Oh Teacher who is the embodiment of pristine consciousness!
The chapter of collected topics being so,
please demonstrate the significant chapters
to us, the devoted retinue.”

Again, the reply:

“Kumārabhūta, you must listen!
Keep my explanation properly in mind!
The meaning of pristine consciousness, which is the innately present
transcendent state,
must be sought in the chapter itself.
My explanation is properly explained.
You must listen faithfully without distraction.

The names of the chapters are as follows:
Chapter 65 explains the predictions for the future.
That also has three topics:
the prediction of the maṇḍala deities,
the prediction of the apparent objects,
and the prediction of empty vidyā.

Chapter 66 explains the principle of transmigration.
That is explained in five topics:
the system of the transmigration of apparent objects,
the system of the transmigration of the path of realization,
the system of the transmigration of the eye of pristine consciousness,
the system of the transmigration of apparent traces,
and the system of the transmigration of the mind and pristine
consciousness.

Chapter 67 explains the axioms of the Great Perfection.

That also has six topics: [32a]

the axiom of nondual vidyā,

the axiom of appearances as mind,

the axiom of the path of self-appearances,

the axiom that overthrows opposition,

the axiom of the pristine consciousness of emptiness,

and the axiom of yogic conduct.

Chapter 68 explains the concise index of the tantra.

That is explained with seven topics:

the concise index of the pristine consciousness of vidyā,

the concise index of the emptiness of yoga,

the concise index of the chronicle of the tantras,

the concise index of the all-basis mind,

the concise index of scriptural axioms,

the concise index of the compassion of great bliss,

and the concise index of the empty words.

Chapter 69 explains verbally defeating opponents.

That is explained with ten topics:

the refutation that uproots false views,

preserving one's own philosophical conclusion,

one's great superiority,

the complete refutation of the mind of appearances,

the refutation of the force³⁹ of appearances,

protecting the path of pristine consciousness,

the refutation on the path of vidyā,

the refutation of conceptual appearances,

the refutation of empty emptiness,

and the refutation of pristine consciousness through a path. [32b]

Chapter 70 explains the divisions of the pristine consciousness of wisdom.

That has twenty topics:⁴⁰

the wisdom that is special and strong,

the wisdom of emptiness that explains the path,

the wisdom of the path of entry,

the wisdom of the signs of that entry,

the wisdom of the method of causing realization,

the wisdom of the consort for union,

the wisdom of the secret place,

the wisdom of special signs,

the wisdom of the measure of familiarity,

the wisdom of apparent kāyas,
the wisdom of the path of vidyā,
the wisdom of being very undistracted,
the wisdom of deluded saṃsāra,
the wisdom of wordless emptiness,
the wisdom of the sign of victory,
the wisdom of perceptible apparent objects,
the wisdom of grasping meditation,
the wisdom that lacks a center or a periphery,
the wisdom of the result that shows the path,
the wisdom of axiomatic emptiness,
and the wisdom of a single axiom.

Chapter 71 explains the intrinsic signs of the victors.

That is explained with nineteen topics:

the sign of the victor's nirvāṇa,
the sign of the warmth of realizing pristine consciousness, [33a]
the intrinsic sign of seeing the visions,
the perceptible sign of the apparent object,
the sign of the characteristic of the beginning of the path,
the sign of the example of seeing the truth,
the sign of the domain of gaining the real,
the sign of the strength of familiarity with samādhi,
the sign of when the object is engaged,
the sign of meditation of the yogic path,
the sign of pure signlessness,
the intrinsic sign of the example for the sign,
the sign of the time of consummate liberation,
the sign of the torpor of objects and sense organs,
the perceptible sign of the time of passing,
the perceptible sign in order to lead disciples,
the ultimate sign free from an object,
the intrinsic sign of the ultimate nature of the mind,
and the sign of sealing appearances.

Chapter 72 explains the entryway to methods.

That also has ten topics:

the explanation of the method of secret mantra,
the explanation of the method of the essence of emptiness,
the explanation of the method of gauging signs,
the explanation of the method of the result of secret mantra,
the explanation of the method of the object of wisdom, [33b]
the explanation of the method of the four branches,

the explanation of the method of the maṇḍala empowerment,
the explanation of the method of the path of uniformity,
the explanation of the method of the nonconceptual object,
and the explanation of the method of the pure meaning.

Chapter 73 explains the removal of the subtle and the coarse taints.

There are also three topics in that:

the taint of characteristics,

the taint of objects of apprehension,

and the inner taint of objects of knowledge.

Chapter 74 explains the division of the three kāyas.

That has two topics:

the nominal three kāyas

and the ultimate three kāyas.

Chapter 75 explains the topics of the empowerment.

That is also explained with three topics:

the explanation of the meaning of the oral instructions,

the explanation in order to obtain the true state,

and the explanation of the five substances.

Chapter 76 explains the transcendent state of self-liberation.

There are ten topics:

appearance liberated from the object,

one's own appearances liberated in space,

samādhi liberated in the mind,

the elements liberated by conditions,

one's own benefit liberated through the path,

appearances liberated through the six,⁴¹

liberation from the view,

liberation from phenomena of cause and condition, [34a]

liberation from the extremes of conceptual grasping,

and liberation from the state of the four extremes.

Chapter 77 explains that stages and paths are not accomplished.

That is also explained by four topics:

not existing as an object of purification,

not existing as a multiple enumeration,

not abiding, departing, or arriving,

and not existing as a sequence of paths and stages.

Chapter 78 explains the Great Perfection's own terminology.
That also has three topics:
discussed through the meaning of the view,
discussed through the meaning of conduct,
and discussed through the meaning of meditation.

Chapter 79 explains unmoving equipoise.
That also has three topics:
never moving from one's own appearances,
never moving from the meaning of the three aspects,
and never moving from the lamps.

Chapter 80 explains the four statements of Mañjuśrī.
That also has three topics:
the statement via method,
the statement via pristine consciousness,
and the statement to cross to the other side.

Chapter 81 explains the self-originated tathāgatas.
That also has two topics:
statements through their own words
and statements through magical power.

Chapter 82 explains the presentation of the hearts [of the dākinīs].
That also has three topics:
the presentation of the request, [34b]
the urging and presentation of the teacher,
and the writing and presentation of secret mantra.

Chapter 83 explains conquering signs.
That has eleven topics:
conquering the domain of signs,
conquering the benefit of others with intention,
conquering object and cognition,
conquering with the lamps,
conquering with the yogi's body,
conquering with daily behavior,
conquering one's benefit with vidyā,
conquering pristine consciousness with the essence,
conquering the path with the result,
conquering secret mantra with the meaning,
and conquering vidyā with strength.

Chapter 84 explains the exposition of realization.
That is explained with two topics:
the exposition based on words
and the exposition that investigates the cause.

Chapter 85 explains setting up the devotional objects of the victors.
That is explained with six topics:
the explanation of the measure of the body,
the explanation of the measure of the voice,
the explanation of the measure of the mind,
the explanation of all three together,
the explanation in order to create faith,
and the explanation for the state of utter purity.

Chapter 86 explains the complete entrustment. [35a]
That also has four topics:
the entrustment by the teacher,
the entrustment by the petitioner,
the entrustment by the collator,
and the complete entrustment.

In the same way, the significance of the names of the chapters
does not exist at all and is abandoned.⁴²
The explanation of names
has been properly explicated, explained,
and explained in great detail with two chapters.”

³⁹. Also *fame*.

⁴⁰. Twenty-one topics are enumerated.

⁴¹. TN: six senses.

⁴². Also, vast.

10. THE ENTRUSTMENT

ONCE AGAIN Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta made the following request: “Oh Bhagavān who possesses great compassion! The explanation of the topics and names of the chapters being so, please explain the method of how to uphold them.”

Again, the reply was given: “Oh children of good families, listen! Listen properly to my explanation of the sublime method! There is neither increase nor decrease in true pristine consciousness. There is neither clarity nor lack of clarity in the appearances of pristine consciousness. There is neither near nor far on the path of secret mantra. [35b] There is neither greater nor smaller in one’s appearances. There is neither sharp nor dull in the capacity of sentient beings.

“If it is asked why this is so, since the appearances exist in the way they are shown, there is neither greater nor lesser in the method. If it is asked why this is so, it is because everyone is liberated through the explanation of the intimate instructions.

“There is neither sharp nor dull in the capacity of sentient beings. If it is asked why this is so, it is because an introduction is sufficient. Therefore, be skilled in the path of the buddhas! Recognize the twenty-one principles of the buddhas! Recognize the measure of the ripened result!

“Oh son of a good family! The transcendent state of buddhahood is seamless. There is neither depletion nor vacuity in suchness itself. The view is self-originated pristine consciousness, free from the extreme of the dualism of an apprehended object and an apprehending subject. The field of pure pristine consciousness is free from the extremes of wide or narrow.”

Next, the bhagavān recited these verses:[43](#)

“Amazing! Self-originated bliss
is not established by looking in a direction.
There is no concept of self in the domain of bliss. [36a]
The treasury of secret pristine consciousness is fully explained.
Give up biased grasping to pristine consciousness.
Without thinking of the best path,
there is no impediment on the transcendent path.
Though there are inconceivable systems of explanation
for this king of tantras [the *Self-Arisen Vidyā Tantra*],

this has been explained through the brief explanation.
The axioms for the path have been fully explained.
This chapter of entrustment
is the eye of all explanations.
This has been explained for the purpose of being free from those objects
that are to be abandoned,
and giving up doubt and uncertainty.
Following my nirvāṇa,
this explanation that removes concepts
from doubting sentient beings
grants permission into the distilled essence of secret mantra.
Since it has been completely entrusted, the secret has been explained.

There are two kinds of entrustments:
the complete entrustment and the entrustment to followers,
which are the two types being asserted.
That is the summary of the stages of explanation
from the chapter of the complete entrustment. [36b]
Because the signs and assertions of the victors
have been fully explained and entrusted,
therefore, the complete explanation is elucidated.
The systems of explanation are inconceivable.

This explanation is secret.
The ultimate intention of secret mantra is

to be understood from this authority.
Because the topics of the text and the axioms are extensive,
therefore, this is an extensive explanation.
Since this tantra has been explained,
all [tantras] have been conquered.
All activities
are free from the four signs.”

43. Demonstrating the tantra as authentic.

COLOPHON

EXPLAINED AS the the key of the great tantra, the Teacher Great Strength removed the concepts of the retinues at the Blazing Volcano charnel ground. The tantra that teaches the key of the tantras entitled the *Self-Liberated Vidyā Tantra*, which explains the topics of the Great Perfection, is complete.

Ithi.

Sealed, sealed, sealed.

Protected by the Protectress of Mantra. Samaya.

There are four mother and child texts of the *Self-Liberated Vidyā Tantra*.
Sādhū, sādhu, sādhu.

APPENDIX I. SURVEY OF THE SEVENTEEN TANTRAS

The Three Series and Nine Dimensions in the Vajra Bridge

SINCE THE TIME of Longchenpa until today, the concept of the three series has been the overarching framework for all exegeses of the Great Perfection. It is so prevalent that it is impossible to have any discussion at all about the Great Perfection without referencing this taxonomy. This taxonomy appears to be relatively recent, dating from the late eleventh century.

Contemporary with the account of the Great Perfection found in the *Great Chronicle*, an alternate scheme for the “three series” is found in the *Vajra Bridge*.⁴⁴ Here, the three series are not the familiar mind series, space series, and intimate instruction series but rather the sūtra division (*mdo sde*), the tantra division (*rgyud sde*), and the space division (*klong sde*).⁴⁵ In the extensive *Vajra Bridge*,⁴⁶ Kunsang Dorjé (Kun bzang rdo rje, circa late twelfth century) explains:

The dharmakāya teacher Samantabhadra explains the doctrine through blessings. The dharmas of the doctrine are three: the sūtra division, the tantra division, and the space division. The meaning of those is taught with respect to the mind. Since the mind resides in the deluded misconceptions of ignorance, the sūtra division is explained in order to render the mind undeluded. Since the mind dwells continually in mindfulness, the tantra division is explained in order to know that dharmatā is also continuously clear and empty. Since that mind itself dwells in the unconditioned dimension (*klong*) without activity, the space series is taught in order to dwell in the dharmatā that lacks activity.

In the medium-length *Vajra Bridge*, Kunsang Dorjé gives a slightly different explanation:

The Dharmas of the doctrine explained by the dharmakāya teacher Śrī Samantabhadra are explained as the remedial division (*'chos sde*), the tantra division, and the space division. If it is asked what

topics are intended by those, the so-called mind is the same in the continua of all sentient beings. That mind dwells in the delusion of the misconceptions of ignorance. In order to render that mind undeluded, the Mahāyoga generation stage is explained to a person of the average of the best capacity as the remedial series. Because the meaning of nondelusion is explained as uninterrupted, the Anuyoga āgamas are explained to a person of the medium of the best capacity as the tantra division. Because the meaning of being uninterrupted is explained as being without activities and without modification, perfect Atiyoga is explained to a person of the best of the best capacity as the space division. At that time, inner secret mantra is explained in three divisions (*sde*).

Another important organizational scheme originating with the Vajra Bridge tradition is the nine dimensions.⁴⁷ These nine dimensions are given in chapter 21 of *Vajrasattvākāśāntasamamahātantra*⁴⁸ as the dimensions of (1) view, (2) conduct, (3) maṇḍala, (4) empowerment, (5) samaya, (6) activities, (7) primal nature,⁴⁹ (8) path, and (9) pristine consciousness.⁵⁰ The purpose of these nine dimensions is to categorize all teachings. As the *Vajrasattvākāśāntasamamahātantra* states in chapter 1:

Though inconceivable doctrines have been taught,
none are not included within the nine dimensions.

The Three Series and Nine Dimensions in the Seventeen Tantras

The general concepts of the three series and the nine dimensions are also used in the intimate instruction series, but in ways markedly different from their presentation in the Vajra Bridge tradition.

The only tantra among the *Seventeen Tantras* that mentions the three series and the nine dimensions is the *Sound Tantra*. Chapter 6 states:

Through the profusion of individual words
from the Natural Great Perfection,
the three series are included within nine dimensions.
Through grouping words together,
there are 6,400,000 ślokas,

35,000 chapters,
and 21, 000 fascicles.

The *Great Chronicle* attributes the division of the 6.4 million verses of the Great Perfection into the three series to Mañjuśrimitra.⁵¹ It is clearly this account that establishes the three series as the dominant organizational strategy for all Great Perfection traditions, placing the intimate instruction series as the most important. In contrast, in the Vajra Bridge tradition, the three series reinforce the preeminence of Atiyoga over the other eight yānas as well as the inner tantras, Mahāyoga and Anuyoga.

The three series are also mentioned in the commentary on the *Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra Tantra*, the *Rosary of Precious Clarity*.⁵² However, this commentary reproduces almost precisely the contents of the above citation and cites several passages from the *Great Space of Vajrasattva* (*Rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha'i che*) under the rubric of the mind series. The other mention of the three series occurs in a brief section within Vimalamitra's *Clarification of the String of Pearls Tantra* (*Rdzogs pa chen po mu tig phreng ba rgyud gsal byed*) that establishes the superiority of the Great Perfection in general and the Seventeen Tantras in particular.

The texts in the *Heart Essence of Vimalamitra* that mention the three series are the *Final Testament of Paṇḍita Vimalamitra* (*Mkhas pa bye ma la'i zhal chems*), the *Clarification of the Meaning of All Sūtras and Tantras* (*Mdo rgyud kun gyi don gsal bar byed pa*) from the *Conch Writing*, the *Precious Concisely Annotated Chronicle* from the *Turquoise Writing*, the *Explanation of the Six Topics of the Mind* (*Sems kyi dmigs drug gi rnam par bshad pa*), and of course, the *Great Chronicle* itself.

Within the *Heart Essence of Vimalamitra*, the *Explanation of the Six Topics of the Mind* is an anonymous commentary with embedded verses attributed to Vimalamitra. Its content reflects the aforementioned citation and further elaborates the mind series into two sections, the space series into three sections, and the intimate instruction series into three sections. However, this commentary makes no mention of the nine dimensions.

The *Illuminating Lamp*,⁵³ a commentary attributed to Vimalamitra on the *Sound Tantra*, which was composed no later than the mid-twelfth century and no earlier than the late eleventh century, offers an explanation of the three series and divides them up into further taxonomies, which are left unexplained.

The *Illuminating Lamp* itself establishes an elaborate taxonomy for the above passage:⁵⁴

With respect to the aforementioned, here, the profusion of the individual words of the verbally signified Great Perfection is included in the trio of the mind series, the space series, and the intimate instruction series.

Among those, within the mind series there are eight divisions: (1) the proponents of the “diversity as mind” in common with Cittamātra, (2) the proponents of the mind division (*sems phyogs*),

(3) the proponents [who claim] the result of the mind has already arisen, (4) the proponents of the mind series texts, (5) the proponents of the appearances of the mind, (6) the proponents of the nature of the mind as naturally perfected, (7) the proponents of the essence of the mind as originally pure, and (8) the proponents of the mind series that follows the mind. Their view, tantras, citations, and number of writings will not be written here because they have been explained elsewhere.

Within the space series, there are two divisions: (1) the proponents of great space and (2) the proponents of vast space.

With respect to those, there are four divisions within the proponents of great space: (1) the proponents of joining view and meditation as the white space, (2) the proponents of carrying meditation into the view as the black space, (3) the proponents who explain view, conduct, and meditation in common as the polychromatic space, and (4) the proponents who explain the self-arising view as the infinite space.

There are four divisions within the proponents of vast space: (1) the proponents of vacant space, (2) the proponents of intrinsically free space, (3) the proponents of unbroken space, and (4) the proponents of overwhelming space.

There are three divisions within the intimate instruction series: (1) the proponents of the scattered teachings, (2) the proponents of the oral teachings, and (3) the proponents of the texts of the tantras themselves. There are eight different divisions in the scattered teachings; there are twelve divisions in the oral teachings; and there are eleven divisions in the texts of the tantras.

Within the intimate instruction series, there are thirty-one dissimilar asserted subjects. Within the space series, there are thirty-nine or forty subjects in total. Within the mind series, there are twenty-four subjects. Thus, in the Great Perfection sixty-four different subjects are intended specifically for the class of those to be tamed.

When all of those are summarized, they are included in nine dimensions (*klong*). The twenty-four topics within the mind series are included in three dimensions: (1) the dimension of the basis, the great liberated mind; (2) the dimension of the path, the great self-appearance; and (3) the dimension of the result, the great self-origination.

Also, the thirty-nine subjects of the space series are included in three dimensions: (1) the dimension of the body proposed as a diversity, (2) the dimension of speech proposed as self-liberated, (3) and the dimension of mind proposed as totally liberated.

The thirty-one topics in the intimate instruction series are included within three dimensions: (1) the dimension of the unmodified body proposed as an intrinsic point, (2) the dimension of the inexpressible voice proposed as natural, and (3) the dimension of the self-liberated mind proposed as intrinsically pure.

Turning to the *Precious Concisely Annotated Chronicle*, most often referenced as the *Great Array*,⁵⁵ it is here that we find the most famous proof-text for the three series:

The mind series is for those who hold to the mind.

The space series is for those who hold to space.

The intimate instruction series is for those free from grades and effort.

In section 4 of the *Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle*, Longchenpa devotes twenty folios to a taxonomical analysis of the three series. Though we cannot cover the entire section, Longchenpa briefly details the basic views of the three series:

The position of the mind series holds that the diversity [is mind] because there are no phenomena that are not one's mind.⁵⁶ The sole intent of these [texts] is to refute that the mind is anything other than the self-originated pristine consciousness. The position of the space series is that there is no destination other than dharmatā, the dimension of Samantabhadrī. The sole intent of these [texts] is to refute that there is anything other than the space of dharmatā, the subject matter. The position of the intimate instruction series lands on the critical point of the state of being. Since the intent of these [texts] is to refute the idle chatter found in the other texts (which are removed from the meaning because they miss the point), [the intimate instruction series] arrives at the pinnacle of them all. There is nothing beyond these three positions, "the Great Perfection of the liberated basis, path, and result implied by inquiry."

The Inner Divisions of the Intimate Instruction Series in the Bindu Cycle

Next, we turn to the inner divisions of the intimate instruction series, the so-called bindu cycle. This is divided into four sections: (1) the outer cycle, (2) the inner cycle, (3) the secret cycle, and (4) the unsurpassed secret cycle. According to the *Great Chronicle*, Śrī Simha is responsible for this division. The primary source for this division is a text from the *Clarification of the Meaning of All*

Sūtras and Tantras, which states the following:

Within the precious Tripiṭaka, Abhidharma is superior. Between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, Mahāyāna is superior. Between the Pāramitāyāna and Mantrayāna, Mantrayāna is superior. Between outer Mantrayāna and inner Mantrayāna, inner Mantrayāna is superior. Among those is [Ati], the pinnacle of all nine levels. When those texts of the great, secret Ati, the king of vehicles, are divided, there are three divisions. From among the trio of (1) the mind series, (2) the space series, and (3) the intimate instructions series, this is the third, the secret intimate instructions. Within the intimate instructions, there are three divisions: (1) oral teachings, (2) scattered teachings, and (3) the texts of the tantras themselves. Among those, the tantras are superior.

Superior to those is the bindu cycle. There are four divisions in the bindu cycle: (1) outer, (2) inner, (3) secret, and (4) the totally perfect, unsurpassed secret.⁵⁷ The outer cycle is like the body, a vast conventional exposition. The inner cycle is like the eyes, seeing a symbolic Dharma. The secret cycle is like the heart, the Dharma that sustains memory. This [totally perfect, unsurpassed secret cycle] is like a person, the perfectly developed body.

Outline of the Seventeen Tantras

Having set out these doxographic categories,⁵⁸ we now turn to the tantras themselves.

There are four important passages that place each tantra into its context.⁵⁹ The first passage is found within chapter 6, reply 1 of the *Sound Tantra*:

To explain the seventeen very refined lights,
these sixteen tantras —

*the Self-Arisen, Self-Liberated,
Self-Originated, Lion's Perfect Strength,
Beautiful Fortune, Fine Inlay of Jewels,
String of Pearls, Without Syllables,
two Mirrors of the Heart,
Union of the Sun and Moon, Ornament of Introduction,
Blazing Relics of the Body, Heap of Jewels,
Blazing Lamp, and Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra* —
emanated from the *Realms and Transformations of Sound*
and appeared to sentient beings who were the object to tame.

This passage is meant to illustrate the principle that the *Sound Tantra* considers itself the origin or basis of the other sixteen tantras. This idea is couched in terms of a progression of mythical teachers, the first of which is Nangwa Dampa (Snang ba dam pa), who taught this tantra during the first eon.

Three passages in the *String of Pearls Tantra* detail the similes, purpose, and sequence of the Seventeen Tantras. First:

Wonderful! Vajrapāṇi listen!
To explain those,
there are topic tantras and word tantras.
Topic tantras are the stages explained above.
Word tantras shall be clarified respectively.
The topics of the tantras shall be disclosed
to those of the retinue who have eliminated proliferation.
The ocean, the sun,
a lion, Sumeru,
a discus, a key,
a sword, a torch,
pure gold, the connection between mother and child,
a mirror, a string of pearls,
the coils of a snake, a great garuda,
a stream of water, a razor,
a king, and a treasury —

such divisions
clarify the word tantras.
Since their topics have been divided,
also their nature will be seen.
Vajrapāṇi, you must definitely uphold this!

Second:

If one knows the three essential tantras,
it is similar to the meeting of the king with his ministers and subjects.
If one knows the three pure tantras,
it is similar to arriving at the peaks of three mountains.
If one knows the three flower tantras,
it is similar to three suns shining in the sky.
If one knows the foundation of all the tantras,
it is similar to placing a foundation stone for the wall of a castle.
If one knows the tantra of the full depth of appearances,
it is similar to reaching the top of the castle.
If one knows the tantra of the pristine consciousness that repels armies,
it is similar to placing windows in the four directions.

If one knows the two great branch tantras,
it is similar to placing balconies on the four sides.
If one knows the tantra that liberates the yogi,
it is similar to the king remaining at the top of the castle.
If one knows the tantra that resembles the heart,
it is similar to closing the gates [of the castle].
If one knows the tantra of the secret text itself,
it is similar to a range of iron mountains located on the border.
If one knows the tantra that is like a weapon,
it is similar to an armored guard.

And third:

Amazing! As such, all the tantras
are supremely amazing!
All of their topics shall be explained.
The sequence of those tantras:
The two root tantras explain all phenomena as one thing.
The pair of mother and child explanatory tantras
are explained in the manner of spreading leaves.
The two branch tantras
are explained like planets and stars reflected in the ocean.
The tantras that clarify citations and reasonings
are explained in the manner of blossoming flowers.
The four tantras of intimate instructions
are explained in the manner of ripening fruit.
The three tantras of the self-abiding transcendent state
are explained in the manner of eyes with sight.
The two tantras for introducing self-liberation
are explained in the manner of the heart center, the basis of thought.
The tantra of ritual expertise
is explained in the manner of a watchdog.
As such, all the tantras
explain the meaning very clearly.

Based on the earlier presentations in the commentary of the *String of Pearls* and the *Eleven Topics of the Great Perfection* (*Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*) by Nyibum, the *Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle* addresses the three passages presented above as (1) the concise enumeration, (2) the extensive explanation of the purpose, and (3) the conclusion through the definitive sequence. First, for the concise enumeration:

First, [the enumeration is eighteen]: The *Self-Arisen Vidyā* explains

the subject matter that is deep and vast, like an ocean. The *Mirror of the Essence of Vajrasattva* explains clearly, like the sun. The *Lion's Perfect Strength* explains the subject matter that overwhelms the lower vehicles. The glorious *Tantra Without Syllables* explains unchanging dharmatā, like Sumeru. The *Beautiful Fortune* explains the wheel that eliminates delusion, like a discus. The *Realms and Transformations of Sound* is the tantra that is like a key because its explanation opens the doors to all piṭākas. The *Mirror of the Mind of Samantabhadra* is the tantra that is like a sword because it severs deviations. The *Blazing Lamp* is the tantra that is like a torch because it explains the appearances of the lamps. The *Fine Inlay of Jewels* is the tantra that is like pure gold because it explains the words and topics, like gold adorned with turquoise. The *Union of the Sun and Moon* is the tantra that is like the connection between the mother and child because in the bardo it refreshes the memory with trustworthy words. The *Ornament of Introduction* is like a mirror because it explains the unification of example and meaning, like a reflection appearing in a mirror. The *String of Pearls* explains the intimate instructions in an orderly way, like an excellent string of pearls. The *Self-Liberated Vidyā* is the tantra like the coils of a snake, which explains the words of the texts as self-liberated, like the coils of a snake. The *Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra*⁶⁰ is the tantra of the view that is like a great garuda that travels in the sky without effort or accomplishment. The *Self-Originated Perfection* is the tantra that is like a stream because it explains empowerments and blessings. The *Blazing Relics of the Body* is the tantra that is like seizing the capital because the lineage of the king does not change. The *Heap of Jewels* is the tantra that is like the treasury of a wealthy man, producing whatever one wishes. The *Wrathful Black Lady* is the tantra that is like a razor destroying transgressors, like a hard razor that slices whatever it touches. Further, the *Wrathful Black Lady* emanated from the tantras in order to protect the doctrine. The other sixteen tantras emanated from the root tantra, the *Realms and Transformations of Sound*.

Having cited the passages from the *Sound Tantra* and the second *String of Pearls* passage, Longchenpa elaborates:

Second, there are eleven divisions in the extensive explanation of the purposes [of the tantras].

The first division includes the three essential tantras: the *Self-Arisen Vidyā*, the *Self-Liberated Vidyā*, and the *Without Syllables*. If one knows these three, one will have command over the general

meaning of the tantras, like a king who has command over his subjects. Further, the *Without Syllables* explains the general intimate instructions of the tantras. It resembles a minister giving directions. The *Self-Arisen Vidyā* maintains the basis of view, meditation, and conduct, like the service, taxes, etc., of the populace. The *Self-Liberated Vidyā* unravels the topics of the latter. As those three tantras are combined, one has command over all the divisions of the tantras, just like [a king] reigning over the kingdom.

The second division includes the three pure tantras: the *Mirror of the Mind of Samantabhadra*, the *Mirror of the Essence of Vajrasattva*, and the *Fine Inlay of Jewels*. If one knows those three, just as one can see all the valleys below because one has arrived on the peaks of three mountains, one can understand all the tantra divisions without confusion.

The third division includes the flowers of the tantras: the *String of Pearls*, the *Beautiful Fortune*, and the *Lion's Perfect Strength*. If one knows those three, one necessarily understands the words and topics of the tantras without confusion, just as all the darkness of the world is cleansed because three suns rise in the sky.

The fourth division includes the foundation of all the tantras, the *Self-Originated Perfection*. Just as one can build many stories if the foundation of the castle is well set, one should understand that those with empowerment know the foundation of liberation.

The fifth division includes the tantra of the full depth of appearances, the *Ornament of Introduction*. Just as one who has climbed to the top of a castle cannot be harmed by an army, one can be unafraid of the places in saṃsāra.

The sixth division includes the tantra of wisdom that repels armies, the *Union of the Sun and Moon*. The purpose is to repel delusion in the bardo.

The seventh division includes the two branch tantras: the *Heap of Jewels* and the *Blazing Relics of the Body*. The purpose is beautification through understanding pristine consciousness as one's own appearances, like placing balconies on the castle.

The eighth division includes the tantra that liberates the yogi, the *Blazing Lamp*. The purpose is to reap benefits by knowing this tantra, just as the king accomplishes all his desires while living at the top of his palace.

The ninth division includes the tantra that is like the heart, the *Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra*. The purpose is to prevent the obscurations of deviation and obstacles because one has realized the view, just as thieves and enemies see no opportunity to harm one when the gates of the castle are closed.

The tenth division includes the secret text itself, the *Realms and Transformations of Sound*. The purpose is to eliminate all doubts, just as a castle is surrounded by a border of iron mountains.

The eleventh division includes the tantra that is like a weapon, the *Wrathful Black Lady*. The purpose is to annihilate transgressors and prevent all obstacles, just as harmful persons are prevented from entering the castle by the excellent guards.

At this juncture, Longchenpa cites the third passage from the *String of Pearls* and elaborates upon it:

Third, having ascertained the definitive sequence in the conclusion, the sequence has eight divisions:

The first division includes the two root tantras: (1) Migrating beings who enjoy elaborations are ripened through the empowerments that possess the outer elaborations, based on the eight chapters of the root, the *Self-Originated Perfection*. (2) Those who have been ripened are given the explanation of the complete critical points of the liberating intimate instructions, based on the six chapters of the *Tantra Without Syllables*.

The second division includes the mother and child explanatory tantras: (1) The subject matter of view, meditation, conduct, and result are clarified based on the eighty-six chapters of the explanatory tantra, the *Self-Arisen Vidyā*. (2) The outline of the mother is clarified on the basis of the nine chapters of the *Self-Liberated Vidyā*.

The third division includes the two branch tantras: (1) The qualities are explained to be perfected within oneself based on the five chapters of the *Heap of Jewels*. (2) The earlier and later signs of the body, voice, and mind are explained based on the three chapters of the *Blazing Lineage of the Kāya*.

The fourth division includes the two tantras that clarify with citations and reasoning: (1) The root of all the piṭakas is explained based on the six chapters of the *Realms and Transformations of Sound*. (2) The time of delusion and so on are identified based on the seven chapters of the *Beautiful Fortune*.

The fifth division includes the four tantras of intimate instructions: (1) Introduction, encountering, empowerment, samaya, and so on are explained based on the eight chapters of the *Mirror of the Essence of Vajrasattva*. (2) Differentiating the obscuration of deviation is explained based on the seven chapters of the *Mirror of the Mind of Samantabhadra*. (3) Confidence in the example, meaning, and sign is explained based on the three chapters of the *Ornament of Introduction*. (4) Buddhahood is attained because the

intimate instructions are explained in an orderly way based on the eight chapters of the *String of Pearls*.

The sixth division includes the three tantras of the self-abiding transcendent state: (1) The explanation that uproots the three realms because the birthplaces of the six realms are purified is based on the six chapters of the *Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra*. (2) The four lamps are demonstrated explicitly based on the four chapters of the *Blazing Lamp*. (3) Taking the four bardos into the path is explained based on the four chapters of the *Union of the Sun and Moon*.

The seventh division includes the two tantras that introduce self-liberation: (1) The contours of the view are extracted based on the thirteen chapters of the *Lion's Perfect Strength*. (2) The path of the yogi is introduced based on the fourteen chapters of the *Fine Inlay of Jewels*.

The eighth division includes the tantra of ritual expertise. The sublime doctrine is protected based on the 108 chapters of the *Wrathful Black Lady Tantra*.⁶¹

Finally, at the conclusion of his *Eleven Topics of the Great Perfection*, Nyibum states:

Among those, there are seven indispensable tantras: (1) The tantra of the basis is the *Tantra Without Syllables*. (2) The root tantra is the *Realms and Transformations of Sound*. (3) The tantra of the lamps is the *Blazing Lamp*. (4) The tantra of introductions is the *Ornament of Introduction*. (5) The tantra of signs is the *Blazing Relics of the Body*. (6) The tantra of the bardo is the *Union of the Sun and Moon*. (7) The tantra of the way reality arises is the *Transcendent State of the Essence*.⁶²

The Eleven Topics of the Seventeen Tantras

We now turn to the contents of the Seventeen Tantras. The primary exegetical framework for the theory and practice of the Great Perfection teachings of the Seventeen Tantras is included in eleven topics,⁶³ a scheme that is also found in the *String of Pearls Tantra*, following the passages listed above:⁶⁴

Though reality is inconceivable,
pristine consciousness has three aspects.
Though there are many bases of delusion,
the basis of delusion is natural perfection and compassion.

Abiding within oneself are the kāyas, families, and pristine consciousnesses.

The location of buddhamind is in the center of the heart.

The path is the four nāḍīs. Vāyu causes movement.

There are four gates of arising: the eyes and so on.

The field is the sky free of clouds.

The practice is trekchö and thögal.

The gauge is the yoga of the four confidences.

The bardo is the meeting of the mother and child.

The stage of liberation is first.

Much has been written on these eleven topics.⁶⁵ The presentation of the eleven topics found within the commentary of the *String of Pearls* (see appendix II) is likely the earliest expanded presentation of the Seventeen Tantras that summarizes their contents in one place. These topics are also covered in such seminal and important works as Nyibum's *Eleven Topics of the Great Perfection* and Longchenpa's *Eleven Topics (Tshig don bcu gcig pa)* found in the *Heart Essence of Vimalamitra*, *Treasury of Precious Topics (Tshig don rin po che mdzod)*, *Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle*, and the *Further Heart Essence of the Guru (Bla ma yang tig)*.

Ancillary Literature of the Seventeen Tantras

When the ancillary literature of the Seventeen Tantras is surveyed, the *Treasury of Philosophical Positions* provides us with what appears to be the sole, comprehensive list of the various texts related to the Seventeen Tantras. The vast majority of these 101 texts are missing or lost. However, ten ancillary texts related to the Seventeen Tantras have serendipitously survived down to the present. It is no understatement to claim that without these texts our understanding of the Seventeen Tantras would be considerably impoverished. In addition, thirty-eight of these 101 texts match when cross-referenced with the list of 119 intimate instructions mentioned in the *Heart Essence of Vimalamitra*.

Among the extant texts, ten texts survive that are directly related to the Seventeen Tantras: (1) a commentary on the *Sound Tantra*, (2) a commentary on the *Tantra Without Syllables*, (3) a commentary on the *String of Pearls*, (4) a commentary on the *Blazing Lamp*, (5) a concise summary of the *Blazing Lamp*, (6) a commentary on the *Six Dimensions of Samantabhadra*, (7) a commentary on the *Blazing Relics of the Body*, (8 and 9) two empowerment texts related to the *Self-Originated Perfection*, and (10) the *Sevenfold Trekchö (Khregs chod bdun pa)*, a text related to the *Ornament of Introduction*. The three latter texts are listed among the 119 intimate instructions.

The *Sevenfold Trekchö*⁶⁶ is found in both the Mtshams brag edition of the

NGB and the BGB. The colophon of the text states it is a chapter of the *Great Array*.

Another possible addition to the list is the so-called *Secret Last Testament*, associated with the *Tantra Without Syllables*. Among all eight of the last testament titles found within the *Golden Writing*, it may in fact be the famed *Three Phrases That Strike the Essential Point* (*Tshig gsum gnad du brdeg pa*) by Garab Dorjé because the subtitle, *Secret Last Testament*, only occurs in that text.⁶⁷

44. Surprisingly, it appears there is not even a single mention of the Vajra Bridge tradition in the length and breadth of Longchenpa's extant works.

45. In these texts, "space series" is taken as a rubric for the Great Perfection in general.

46. There are three Vajra Bridge texts — extensive, medium-length, and small — all authored by Kunsang Dorjé. The latter two abbreviate the first.

47. The scheme of the nine dimensions is absent from the twenty-one texts identified by Longchenpa as the core "mind series" texts.

48. See Sten Anspal, "The Space Section of the Great Perfection (rDzogs-chen klong-sde): a category of philosophical and meditative teachings in Tibetan Buddhism," PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2005. The title of this tantra is evidently a back-translation. The BGB gives the title in mixed Sanskrit and Tibetan as *Vajrasattva mkha' samanta mahā tantra*, whereas we find it translated as *Vajrasattvākāśāntasamamahātānta* elsewhere. There is also the related text *Byang chub kyi sems kyi rgya mtsho klong dgu'i rgyud*, cited frequently by Sei Bandhé Yeshé Jungden as the *rgya mtsho'i lung*, which is also found in the BGB.

49. *Dgongs pa*: this rendering is based on the translation of the title *Sarvathāgatābhisarvadharmaprakṛtiyogadyanāntarāsaṃskṛtapuṇaṃvyākaraṇa* into the Tibetan as *Chos thams cad rang bzhin de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi dgongs pa rnal 'byor pa'i bsam gtan khyad pa can du 'dus ma byas par lung bstan*. See KSG, vol. 108, page 254.

50. There are a series of twenty texts in vol. 108 of the KSG, which begin with ten texts attributed to Garab Dorjé and another nine texts attributed to various lineage masters, such as the Nāgarāja Nanda. These twenty texts are also related to the Vajra Bridge tradition, but focus specifically on the nine dimensions found in the *Vajrasattvākāśāntasamamahātānta*. The *Exposition of the Maṇḍala of All Phenomena* (*Sarvadharmamaṇḍalavyākaraṇa*) identifies this tantra as the source of the nine dimensions.

51. This account is completely absent in the chronicles connected with the accounts of the Great Perfection teachings recovered from India by Vairocana.

52. *Rin po che gsal ba'i phreng ba*, also known as *Kun tu bzang po klong drug kyi*. The colophon of this commentary notes that it is a text received by one Shedang Dorjé, which is the initiatory name of Shangtön Tashi Dorjé. This name is also referenced in Vimalamitra's *Copper Writing* (*Dung yig can*) in which Shangtön appears as a disciple of Sengé Wangchuk.

53. One caveat should be noted: It appears that the author of the *Illuminating Lamp* is

unfamiliar with the Vajra Bridge tradition. His presentation of the three series and nine dimensions in no way resembles the presentation in the *Vajra Bridge*. One is tempted to think that while the author of the *Sound Tantra* was familiar with the three series and nine dimensions as presented in the Vajra Bridge tradition, the author of the *Illuminating Lamp*, the commentary on the *Sound Tantra*, was not.

54. This passage forms the basis for the elaborate taxonomies of the Great Perfection discussed by Longchenpa in the *Treasury of Philosophical Positions* and the *Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle*.

55. According to the *Great Chronicle*, the *Great Array* [*Bkod pa chen po*] was never fully translated into Tibetan. The main source for citations from it is the *Turquoise Writing*. A second source for passages is the commentary on the *String of Pearls*. A third source is the *Sevenfold Trekchö*.

56. This is exemplified by the passage from the *Cuckoo of Vidyā*: “The primal nature of diversity is also nondual.”

57. Shangtön writes in the *Great Chronicle*, “[T]hirty years later, Chegom Nagpo of Nardah, Rong district, went to the place where Chetsun disappeared and took out the outer, inner, and secret aural lineages. The instructions were not promulgated to others beside himself. These then spread widely in Ü and Tsang. Fifty years after the revelation by Chegom, I (Shangtön) removed these unsurpassed secret cycles. The instructions were not promulgated to others apart from myself. At this time, 1568 years have elapsed since the Buddha’s parinirvāṇa.”

58. This discussion necessarily excludes the alternate divisions of *ati*, *spyi ti*, and *yang ti*. For these, see Jean-Luc Achard, “The View of *sPyi ti Yoga*,” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*, 31 (February 2015): 1–20.

59. There is also a series of texts in the *Heart Essence of Vimalamitra*, constituting the entire contents of the *Conch Writing*, that provides an analysis of the Seventeen Tantras. These are the materials upon which Longchenpa based his exposition of the Seventeen Tantras in the *Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle* and other texts.

60. Here, the text erroneously lists the *Mirror of the Mind of Samantabhadra* a second time.

61. Unknown. This is not the *Ekajaṭī Tantra* found in modern collections of the Seventeen Tantras.

62. This is likely the *Mirror of the Essence of Vajrasattva*.

63. In the texts, the term is *tshig don*, or in Sanskrit, *padārtha*, which literally means “the meaning of the word,” but consistently refers to “topic,” “category,” and so on.

64. Following ADZ.

65. See the introduction to Malcolm Smith, *Buddhahood in This Life* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2016).

66. The Indic title of this text, *Samapāta nāma*, provides us with insight into the source of the term *khregs gcod* / *khregs chod*.

67. However, this is slightly complicated by the fact that the *Golden*, *Agate*, and *Turquoise Writing*, *Gser yig can*, *Phra yig can*, and *Gyu yig can*, respectively, all composed by Vimalamitra, are listed among the 119 intimate instructions, which in turn have many subtexts.

APPENDIX II. THE ELEVEN TOPICS FROM THE *COMMENTARY ON THE STRING OF PEARLS*⁶⁸

When explaining the categories of the summation of the Seventeen Tantras, the profound summary gathers all the topics into eleven topics. Here, the eleven topics will be explained.

1. The first topic is original realization, how the basis exists before realization produced buddhahood and sentient beings arose.

There are seven approaches to the basis: (1) asserting the basis as originally pure, (2) asserting the basis as naturally perfected, (3) asserting the basis as undefined, (4) asserting the basis as a defined ultimate entity, (5) asserting that the basis can become anything at all, (6) asserting that the basis can be accepted as anything at all, and (7) asserting the basis as a polychromatic diversity.

From the perspective of the two kinds of persons, there are (1) persons who follow philosophical tenets and (2) persons who follow the path. This explains the second approach.

Since there are six flawed positions, the flawed positions are identified. Because there is one faultless position, the faultless position is confirmed. Among these two, the flawed positions are to be put aside and discarded.

1.1. Since the position that the basis is naturally perfected is flawed, the basis is impossible. If the cause is asserted to be naturally perfected, the basis will be ineffective. Since the basis is given the name “cause,” the expression itself is defective. In that case, if it is deemed established, is the result established in that cause or not? If it is deemed established, one will not be able to avoid the fault that the result will possess a contradiction.

What if sometimes [the basis] is a cause in which the result is also established? Since the cause is established from the result, there is (1) the fault of an infinite regress and (2) the unavoidable fault that the cause and the result are the same.

If it is asserted [that the cause and the result] are the same, the expression, “the cause and result of karma,” will be defective.

If it is asserted that the cause and result are different, the

assertion that the cause is naturally perfected is defective.

If that cause is established in the result, one cannot reject the consequence that the result is the cause. Therefore, since the result cannot be designated as the cause, the connection of the cause and the result should be understood from investigating them — causes generate results, but causes are not generated from results.

Alternatively, if it is asserted that everything is naturally perfected from everything, since one will not be able to refute what has not been asserted, one will not be able to prove one's own assertion. Therefore, there is no purpose in [asserting the basis is] naturally perfected.

Since proving a favorable position and disproving an unfavorable position makes a naturally perfected basis one-sided, the assertion of a naturally perfected basis is defective.

Suppose that the naturally perfected basis is stated to be nondual. If the cause, result, and so on are nondual, the assertion of a naturally perfected basis is defective. Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are also rendered false.

Further, reasoning negates the absence of a result at the time of a naturally perfected cause and so on. There are more reasonings to be elaborated with respect to that, but they will not be elaborated here.

Therefore, since the assertion that the basis is naturally perfected is recognized to be defective, it should be discarded. Since the basis is asserted to be all-pervasive through the aspect of compassion, the premise that it is naturally perfected is unnecessary.

1.2. The assertion that the basis is undefined is also flawed. If it is merely undefined nominally, then it cannot be considered to be defined or undefined with different names because the name would be incorrect. If the basis is undefined with respect to the meaning, is it undefined from the perspective of a change in meaning or not? If the meaning changes, meaning is impossible. If the meaning does not change, a meaning cannot be undefined. Likewise, if the meaning is undefined because it exists, it is impossible to deny in direct perception.

If the basis is undefined because it does not exist, an investigation of whether something is defined or not can find nothing in a nonexistence. Likewise, appearance and emptiness will be the same thing everywhere. Therefore, since the assertion that the basis is undefined is flawed, it should be discarded. Since the basis arises as a diversity through the aspect of compassion, there is no need to investigate the meaning of being undefined.

1.3. Asserting the basis as a substantial, ultimately defined basis is also flawed. If the basis is defined in a name, the definiendum cannot be in the name because it would be a word. Also, since the object of designation is not established as a mere name and the designator is not established as a mere word, the definiendum cannot be found.

Is the defined basis ultimately permanent or impermanent? If it is permanent, this does not differ from the position of non-Buddhist eternalists because a sound that is permanent cannot be engaged. Since one will definitely cycle in saṃsāra because [the basis] is permanent, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are annihilated, and there is no purpose in the efforts of sentient beings. Therefore, the assertion that the basis is defined is flawed and should be discarded. Since the basis is originally pure, it is not asserted as either permanent or impermanent.

1.4. The position that the basis can be accepted as anything at all is flawed. If it is accepted as existent, is that existence pervaded with nonexistence or not? If it is pervaded with nonexistence, it cannot exist. If it is not pervaded with nonexistence, one cannot reject the reasoning of dependency because nonexistence depends on existence. Likewise, appearance and consciousness are merged in everything.

Even if the basis is accepted to be nonexistent, it is the same as before. Otherwise, existence is impossible if the basis is accepted as nonexistent. For example, even if one could accept the basis as anything, since it is a flawed assertion, it should be discarded. There is no need to accept the basis as anything at all. Since everything arises from the nature, a permanent basis is not proposed.

1.5. The assertion that the basis is totally mutable is also a flawed position. If the basis can change from an existent into a nonexistent, this should be evident in direct perception. Likewise, a cause cannot change into a result and a result cannot change into a cause. All other [opposites] are the same, such as appearance and emptiness, and permanence and annihilation. Therefore, since this assertion is also flawed, it should be discarded. Since the basis arises as impartial compassion, it cannot be impeded in any way.

1.6. The assertion that the basis is polychromatic is also a flawed position. When the basis appears white, is it also pervaded by yellow and so on, or not? If it is pervaded by yellow, the term “white” will be defective. If it is not pervaded by yellow, the assertion it is polychromatic is defective. If it is claimed that while it is white, it is also yellow, when it appears as white, yellow is not established. When it appears as yellow, white is not established. If it

appears as polychromatic all at once, the basis will be differentiated. Just as the sensation of hot and cold cannot be concurrent, if the basis appears to the eye consciousness as blue, the appearance of white and so on are impossible because white and blue are mutually exclusive. Therefore, since this assertion is flawed, it should be discarded. Since the basis is unfabricated in the nature, though it arises as polychromatic, the essence is originally pure. Since the six positions are flawed beyond conception, they cannot be the basis.

1.7. Since the basis arises as the essence (the originally pure pristine consciousness), so-called delusion is not established in the basis at all because it is originally pure. Since so-called nondelusion is also not established, the basis is all-pervasive. Ultimately, there is nothing to accept.

The nature exists as the pristine consciousness that illuminates everything; however, it is not a contradiction to conventionally label it “delusion.” It is also not a contradiction to label it “nondelusion.” Therefore, since delusion does not exist in the basis, it is empty of conventional designations. Since delusion is not established in the basis, the basis does not exist as either deluded or nondeluded.

The third aspect is the compassion (the all-pervading pristine consciousness) that arises impartially without relying on existence, nonexistence, permanence, or annihilation.

Since the aspect of the essence (original purity) has never been deluded from the beginning, the names “buddha” and “sentient being” do not exist. Delusion does not exist in the present — vidyā itself has always been buddhahood. Since delusion is not possible later on, a so-called basis cannot be deluded.

Since the diversity cannot cease through the aspect of the nature (natural perfection), however the diversity appears, it is not empty because nothing can sully the essence.

Through the aspect of all-pervading compassion, the semblance of delusion is unimpeded. However saṃsāra arises, it liberates itself.

Further, from the perspective of convention, whatever appears can be confirmed with the three kāyas.

While appearances arise as a diversity, they are neither something nor nothing. Arising arises as everything. The liberation of that arising liberates everything. Since that liberation is liberated in itself, it does not become something other than what it is. If one gives that a name, it is the dharmatā that does not come from anywhere, does not stay anywhere, and does not go anywhere. As such, since it exists, it arises. Since it arises, it pervades. Since it

pervades, it is empty. Since that emptiness is beyond identification, it neither comes nor goes. It is continuous at all times and does not fall into limitations — it is the pristine consciousness that permanently abides.

Since reality does not go beyond the trio [of essence, nature, and compassion], it is explained in the *Syllable of Original Purity*.⁶⁹

2. The second topic is delusion. While the variety can be called delusion, distinct from that, there are two bases [of delusion]: (1) the enumeration of the modes of delusion and (2) saṃsāra itself as the mode of delusion.

2.1 The mode of delusion is explained in the *Beautiful Fortune Tantra* with a twelvefold enumeration.

The basis of delusion is confirmed through the root and branches of (1) *ignorance*.⁷⁰ Deluded karma is confirmed based on the mode of delusion of the root and branches of (2) *formations*. The cause of delusion is based on (3) *consciousness* counting many enumerations based on (a) the mode of delusion from counting many names and (b) the mode of delusion from [consciousness] engaging various names. The time of delusion is confirmed based on the mode of delusion through the particles and subtle particles of (4) *matter*.

The result of delusion is confirmed based on the mode of delusion that relies on the definitive number of (5) the *six sense bases*. The signs of delusion are confirmed based on the mode of delusion of saṃsāra because of (6) *contact*. The extent of delusion is confirmed based on the mode of delusion of the various supports for (7) *sensation*. The confirmation of the delusion of the mutual exclusion of body and mind is based on the mode of delusion that combines the twin discernments of the action of delusion that depends on distinct entrances into (8) *craving* and (9) *addiction*. The confirmation of the delusion of individual ripening is based on the explanation of the special defining characteristic of the outer and inner delusion that depends on the delusion of the cause of (10) *becoming* and the delusion of the karma of (11) *birth*. There is the confirmation of delusion based on the various conclusions about (12) *aging and death*.

Since aging and death are also established as name and matter, both name and matter are established as matter because name⁷¹ exists based on particles and subtle particles. Since those two are considered one thing, the confirmation of the twelvefold mode of delusion arises as the twelve-year cycle that ripens sentient beings.

Further, the spreading, gathering, and balancing of the elements exists as twelve functions within a single migrating being's body during the time of its existence.

As such, within the signs of delusion, the outer twelve months are counted as a year. Led by the unerring calculus of delusion based on the *Clear Mirror of the Basis of Delusion*,⁷² the time, location, reversal, manner of delusion, and so on are definitely confirmed.

Further, according to the common vehicles, since delusion originates from ignorance, it is asserted that a body will encounter ordinary aging and death. That is not so. These two are different. Further, with respect to aging and death, in the land of Oddiyāna we find five different methods of calculation. Since there are five different modes of delusion, also different kinds of bodies arise for migrating beings. Within these, there arise different kinds of concepts. These are explained extensively in a section of the *Beautiful Fortune Tantra*. They are explained in great detail in the *Clear Mirror of the Basis of Delusion*.

As such, though there is a multifaceted explanation, for each one there is a two-part summary: (1) Aging and death at the time of natural perfection is calculated at the time delusion abides — confirming the extent of the concepts of karmic movement and pristine consciousness. (2) Aging and death at the time of compassion confirm the characteristics of different bodies, karmas, sense organs, and so on, as well as the reversal of delusion. Since these are multiplied by two, ultimately, the wheel of delusion spins twenty-four times. Therefore, since the entirety of outer and inner saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are confirmed, it is said, “The basis of delusion is encountered in the calculation.”

The critical point of the aforementioned: Since at the time of natural perfection the so-called basis is confirmed to be generic and at the time of compassion it is confirmed to be a specific consciousness, all the causes and conditions of saṃsāra are definitely confirmed. Thus, from the difference between those two [natural perfection and compassion], the signs are definitively confirmed at the time of the ripening of the body — because of these signs, one can be confident.

3. The third topic is the way the basis or seed is present in one's body due to delusion. It is present in groups of five: the five kāyas, five families, five pristine consciousnesses, five lights, five vāyus, and five wisdoms. There are two for each mode of delusion. Since a cause and a condition are calculated for both, there are four. Since

there are different functions, they become five. Thus, having become delusions, they also arise in divisions of five. Since delusion arises in divisions of five, there are also five divisions in the body — the five aggregates and so on. The meanings and signs of those [divisions of five] are explained in detail elsewhere.

4. The fourth topic is identifying where within oneself those groups are located: The location of the basis is that place in the center of the body (where the pristine consciousness of the pure mind of buddhahood resides) in which all the channels are gathered. The so-called calculation arises from the branches of the calculation of delusion. Within the four *nāḍīs* of the precious heart center, there are two elements each. Thus, the four *nāḍīs* become eightfold. Through the calculation of the three functions of the elements [spreading, gathering, and balancing], the four *nāḍīs* cycling with twelve revolutions are the critical point of the twelvefold wheel of delusion. Since the essence exists as the *kāyas*, the three *kāyas* are confirmed here. Since the nature exists as *bindus*, the lamp of the empty *bindu* visibly arises. Since compassion exists as light, it visibly appears at the time of the visions. As such, the transcendent state of buddhahood is based on a physical location. Since buddhahood is located in the center of the body, it is called “a location.”

5. The fifth topic is the path in which that basis arises. First is the formation of each of the *nāḍīs* of the four generative elements (at the time the body is conceived in the womb of the mother). The mingling of the gathered elements produces the child based upon the formation of the water *nāḍī* in the east. The activity of spreading⁷³ is based on the earth *nāḍī* in the south. The activity of balancing is based on the fire *nāḍī* in the west. The vehicle of ripening as the body of delusion is based on the air *nāḍī* in the north. Since the cause of delusion is gathered, the *cakras* are balanced from the spreading of the condition. The individual activities [of the elements] are caused by disturbance. Further, the relative cause originates from the material of the mother’s element.⁷⁴ The ultimate cause originates from the father’s element. Among those, the body is generated from the relative cause. Pristine consciousness is generated from the ultimate cause. The relative ripening of those causes results in the aggregates, sense bases, and elements of the body. The ultimate ripening of those causes results in the four lamps, the colors of pristine consciousness, the *dhātu*, and so on. Among those four, the earth element juncture [at the navel] for developing the body creates the function of hardening and flesh. The water juncture [at the heart center] for thought

processes creates the function of moistening and blood. The fire juncture in the throat for taste creates the function of spreading and warmth. The air element juncture in many nāḍīs creates the function of breathing.

In the center of those four nāḍīs are three nāḍīs that are straight like pillars. The relative bindu moves through the right nāḍī. The ultimate bindu moves through the left nāḍī from the natural center. Further, on the path, the nāḍīs have a special function of gathering the elements of the body. The so-called basis intended here is the four elements. Alternately, the nāḍīs are calculated from the initial conception. Those elements are the essence of the aforementioned nāḍīs. These are the examples for the nāḍīs: the nature of earth arises from the kati that is like gold, the nature of water arises from the tube that is like crystal, the nature of fire arises from the subtle and coiled nāḍī that is like a thread of white silk, and the nature of air arises from the nāḍī that causes arising in the field of the sense organ that is like a gaur horn.

From among the three essential nāḍīs, the karma vāyu of the apprehended object and its element moves in the right nāḍī. The karma vāyu of the apprehending subject moves in the left nāḍī. Since the intrinsically pure vāyu (the vāyu of nonconceptual pristine consciousness that moves in the middle nāḍī without either subject or object) is not divided by any concepts and because it exhausts all taints of the extreme of conceptual grasping, it is the actual dharmatā of nirvāṇa.

6. The sixth topic is the doorway through which the basis arises. The doorway that is the ground of arising (the special ripening that arises from the gathering of the pure aspects of the four elements) is intended as the four lamps. As such, from the perspective of ripening, the intention of the term “basis” is that the essence of pristine consciousness ripens in the two eyes and the vāyu of pristine consciousness ripens in the two ears. Vidyā itself ripens in the crown.

As evidence of those, the lamp of the empty bindu visibly arises from the eyes. It also arises from pressing the nāḍīs [of the eyes] with the thumbs of the hands.⁷⁵

The golden nāḍī is located in the depression in front of both ears. Pressing them causes the sound of vāyu.

Face a wall in the west above a lake in the east. As soon as the sun rises over one's crown, one should look west. Since one looks without moving the eyes, one will see the purplish vapor rising from the crown.

The basis arises from the two eyes as both the lamp of the

empty bindu and the pure lamp, and it arises through the nostrils as the lamp of self-originated wisdom. The eyes are the actual lamp of the watery far-reaching lasso.⁷⁶

7. The seventh topic is the field in which the vidyā that has arisen from the doorway appears. Further, vāyu gathers all dharmatās into that field; vidyā is included in that.

8. The eighth topic is how to practice. There are both those inclined toward perceptual objects and those inclined toward the self-appearance of vidyā. In this case, it is the practice of those inclined toward the self-appearance of vidyā — the practice of trekchö and the practice of thögal.

The practice of trekchö is not integrated with appearances. It liberates instantly through the mere explanation of the intimate instructions, for example, like an arrow striking a man's heart.

The practice of thögal is explaining both (1) the preliminaries, the practice of the intimate instructions of guidance, and (2) the main subject, how the immaculate pristine consciousness exists within one's continuum.

9. The ninth topic is the gauge of the practice. The four kinds of confidences are (1) fearless confidence (even toward the suffering of the hot and cold hells), (2) lack of enthusiasm for buddhahood, (3) the absence of the suffering of fear because of falling into saṃsāra, and (4) the absence of hope for nirvāṇa. In addition, one acquires an additional four confidences: (1) vidyā itself is the critical point of buddhahood; (2) vidyā is the critical point of liberation into great bliss; (3) the critical point that saṃsāra is nirvāṇa; and (4) the critical point that something called “nirvāṇa” is not established. Since these qualities arise, they are called “the wealth of Dharma and sentient beings.”

10. The tenth topic is how the bardo arises. Here, what is called “the bardo of dharmatā” is absent in other systems. (1) Since the appearance of the child, vidyā, arises in the mother, dharmatā; (2) since there is no subtle or coarse material movement; and (3) since the arising of light and the pavilion of light are recognized as one's own appearances, there is liberation and so on. This is extensively explained elsewhere. Second is the stage of the union of vidyā and dharmatā — vidyā becomes dharmatā from abiding in the nature. When confidence is attained in that stage, one obtains the unfathomable qualities of buddhahood, such as the six recollections, natural concentration, the dhāraṇīs of nonforgetting, the six clairvoyances, and so on. These are attained permanently. This is explained extensively in the *Union of the Sun and Moon Tantra*.

11. The eleventh topic is the explanation of the stage of liberation. The essence, nature, and compassion of dharmatā (pure from the beginning) are inseparable, indivisible, unmoving, nonabiding, and not accepted and not rejected. Further, the original basis is not an object of intellectual investigation. In addition, that is full awakening (buddhahood) into the essence, free of limitations, uniform and impartial, like space dissolving into space.

68. Taken from *String of Pearls Tantra* (*Mu tig rin po che phreng ba'i rgyud: Rnying ma'i rgyud bcu bdun*). Thimpu, 1973, pages 520–40.

69. *Ka dag yi ge*: one of the nine lost commentaries on the *Beautiful Fortune Tantra*.

70. Reading *ma sa* as a scribal error for *ma rig pa*.

71. Reading *mig* as a scribal error for *ming*.

72. *'Khrul gzhi gsal ba'i me long*: one of the nine lost commentaries on the *Beautiful Fortune Tantra*. It is also listed as the third among the 119 intimate instructions.

73. Reading *byed pa* as a scribal error for *byer ba*.

74. Reading *me* as a scribal error for *mo*.

75. This appears to resemble the principle found in the Vajra Bridge instructions.

76. TDD notes on page 986: “Though past generations have asserted that lamp is the actual eye, it appears that they have not distinguished the piercing aspect of the light nāḍis.”

Om
Om
Om



Handwritten signature or calligraphic mark.

TABLE OF TIBETAN EQUIVALENTS

sgdunvags

dgfnpd

khkhusipa

hava

giedatā

Elusma

dhaskyid dbyings, chos dbyings

dharmatā

dhāring

klomgmsion

dinagmperscription

display

sgorway

equipoisezhag (see also “unfettered equipoise”)

asgchoe snying po

fioldzhing

fiyongflictionsnga

fiyenggrengas

klvanselments

fiyempfactibongs lnga

fiyelchuslinga consciousnesses

shasvabdogs

ftsandakation

gshuge

gdag nyidchen po

iasubstantiated

hitehied, intelligence

intimaga instructions

intrinsic clarity

bdainsiyidature

kasnlangyu

klāya

klmesvigg consciousness

ghetathanpa

gdaningscence

lodhgsadity

hūrd

tsleadure

sgeditation

seensalifocus

seind, blo, yid

rtādī

ratgrkhin

nang rkhimbsa magam
 nang rghas cation
 haturghyberperfected
 nang rzhin
 nang rbsin med
 gldāgagzhi
 tong conceptual (wisdom)
 gonyidualed
 dongsfene dīal
 dmaniscia dōkhyen pa
 kaingalka pāsedoginal purity
 pēhēchal
 kbbhdyhgomatintshogs
 pjesthqbipoise
 kbstulrshor
 psta dntiality
 prāgasrog ’dzin
 priedwags
 peistias consciousness
 pigpāie yosheis consciousness of vidyā
 ppo dīfōration
 quindēssence
 radiānge
 gadāmidelagity
 basāyāera
 gadistylugs
 rtadization
 ngoghetioshes
 seifications
 bēsttag
 fbrastbu
 dshig strong
 sangādu ’dzin, ting ’dzin
 belāg, rang
 sehēgapanrānce
 sehēgashan
 sehēlgrolated
 sehēdryimgated
 sehēdryimgated pristine consciousness
 sehēplagfy
 khorādianro fshamsāra and nirvāṇa
 sinēdāishesadices
 skayn mkha’, bar snang

spancənkaʰ

stability

stability nyid, de nyid

thünna

thödagal

total perfection

transcendent state

trikagochod

ugagasing

ugchamagidg

madagacpa

madakhdad

midhwyedd

madhwasatad

unfettered equipoise

uniformityid

thogspedch 'gag med

thogsmadch 'gag med

rdorajelhaigu rgyud

rdorajelhaigu rgyud

rdorajelhaigu rgyud

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ~~ADZ~~ A 'dzom Chögar (A 'dzom chos sgar)
- ~~Baib~~ Gyübum (Bairo rgyud 'bum)
- ~~KSG~~ Ma Shintu Gyepa (Bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa)
- ~~NGB~~ Gyübum (Rnying ma rgyud 'bum)
- ~~TMD~~ don mdzod

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ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR



BORN IN 1962, Malcolm Smith was raised in Western Massachusetts. Captivated by the sound of Tibetan ritual music in 1984, he began his study of the Dharma. Malcolm met his first formal teacher, H. H. Sakya Trizin, in 1989. He studied Buddhist philosophy and Tibetan language under the guidance of Khenpo Migmar Tseten for the next five years at Sakya Institute for Buddhist Studies in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1990 he traveled to Nepal to receive lamdré from the late H. H. Sakya Dagchen.

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Since 1992 Malcolm has worked on a wide variety of texts for Sakya, Drikung Kagyü, and Nyingma groups, as well as medical and astrological texts.

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